Editorial by David Briggs

Welcome to the latest edition of the RCN NPC network newsletter.

Following the network election we have two new members elected to the RCN NPC National Council, John Hill and David Vickers. It is no secret how active they have been in the RCN. They are bringing this experience and enthusiasm to the network and their activities at the NPC. We also have some continuity in network representation at the NPC as June Clark and myself were re-elected for another two-year term. We will all continue to work on your behalf and to bring you news from the NPC. This includes working to ensure that health and social care issues are at the heart of NPC policy and campaigns, whilst also picking up new issues as they arise. An example of this is the challenges presented by digital inclusion/exclusion which is a particular interest of mine.
There is always much to do and if you feel you would like to contribute to our work at the NPC, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

For those of you who engage with the RCN NPC Network Facebook group, you will have seen the presentation on the value of older members within the RCN given by Wendy Irwin, RCN Equality and Diversity Lead, at the February meeting of the Yorkshire & the Humber retired members’ group. We all know that older members of our organisation have so much to offer. The question for the RCN is how to harness that expertise and experience to benefit our professional body and trade union and individual members.

**Results of the RCN NPC Network elections**

The RCN is affiliated to the National Pensioners Convention (NPC), which campaigns for the rights of retired people, and represents the interests of pensioners across a range of political, social and health issues. The RCN has four votes at the NPC National Council, four votes at the Biennial Delegate Conference, a seat on the Executive Committee, and access to the NPC Annual Convention (formerly Pensioners' Parliament).

Every two years the RCN NPC network elects four members to take up seats on the NPC National Council, one of these members also holds a seat on the NPC Executive Committee. The elected four also attend the NPC Biennial Delegate Conference, the NPC policy making body, and access the NPC Annual Convention (formerly Pensioners' Parliament).

Network members were elected to the four available seats on the NPC National Council taking up their positions in January 2020. They are also active, along with other RCN members, on NPC working parties which cover a range of issues as outlined below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Positions</th>
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<tr>
<td>June Clarke</td>
<td>NPC Council, NPC Executive Committee, NPC Health &amp; Social Care Working Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Briggs</td>
<td>NPC National Council, NPC Digital Inclusion Working Party, deputy for NPC Executive Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Vickers</td>
<td>NPC National Council, NPC Health &amp; Social Care Working Party (job share with June)</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Hill</td>
<td>NPC National Council, NPC Trade Union Working Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cordelia Okwusogu</td>
<td>NPC Minority Elders Working Party</td>
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A big thank you to network members Joyce Forge and Dougie Lockhart whose terms of office at the NPC came to an end in December 2019. They have given a lot to the RCN NPC network through their respective contributions to the NPC Minority Elders and Trade Union working parties, and our monthly teleconferences.
Profiles of your RCN NPC representatives

Find out more about your NPC elected members and other network activists in their profiles.

Picture left to right

Back row: Jenny Janes - network activist, John Hill – elected member, David Briggs – elected member. Front row: David Vickers – elected member, June Clark – elected member, Dot Gibson – NPC Deputy General Secretary, Cordelia Okwusogu – network activist

June Clark

June Clark has been an RCN activist serving at branch, national and international level for more than 50 years. She was a member of RCN Council for many years, Chair of Congress for four years and finally President. Her nursing career started in health visiting and progressed through to managing community nursing services, which in that post included responsibility for services for elderly people, chief nurse to a health authority before moving into nursing education. Here she started the nursing programme at Middlesex University before becoming Swansea University’s first professor of nursing.

For the past two years she has served as co-ordinator of the RCN NPC Network and represents the RCN on the NPC National Council, NPC Executive Committee, Health
and Social Care Working Party, attending and presenting at the Biennial Delegate conference and annual Pensioners’ Parliament.

In addition to her RCN work, she is active in several organisations concerned with health and social care. June has been involved with services for older people for many years. She has extensive experience both within and outside the RCN of campaigning and policy development relating to services for older people. She has given evidence both written and orally to Welsh Government and local MPs and AMs.

She continues to lobby for a recognised place for retired members in the RCN organisational structure.

**David Vickers**

David has had a 46 year career as a nurse, teacher, academic and project/programme manager. He has worked in health facilities and universities in the UK and in post-conflict and post-disaster situations in Kuwait, Lebanon, Bosnia and Pakistan. He has also advised universities and organisations in Ghana, Ukraine, Egypt and North Korea.

David has been active in the RCN for many years, joining the RCN Student Nurses Association in 1969 and later becoming an RCN steward. He has also been a member of the RCN Occupational Health Nursing Association Executive Committee. In 2018, he became interested in the work of the RCN NPC Network, joining the elected representatives on their monthly teleconferences. This led to him to successfully stand for election, taking up his seat on the NPC National Council in January 2020. He is now also job sharing with June membership of the NPC Health and Social Care Working Group.

David lives in Rotherham where he is an active member of his branch and on the branch committee. He is chair of both the Yorkshire & Humber regional retired members’ group and Rotherham Older Persons’ Forum which has a vision to establish an age friendly Rotherham by 2025. David also sits on an NHS England Sounding Board, an Age UK project to facilitate the public voice to be heard by NHS commissioners at a national level.

**David Briggs**

David was elected as an RCN NPC representative in 2017. Since then he has been active in representing the interests of older members at events like the annual NPC Pensioners’ Parliament and the policy making NPC biennial delegate conference. He was recently re-elected to his seat on the NPC National Council. His roles in the network include leading on communications functions with members through the website, Facebook page and newsletter. He is also active in NPC working parties, including the Digital Exclusion/Inclusion Working Party. This year he will be job sharing attendance at the NPC Executive Committee with June Clarke.

**John Hill**

John’s working life started out in the steel industry where he was a union activist. In 1983, he took a different direction and trained as a nurse. His nursing experience
includes acute medicine with older people, staff nurse and A&E charge nurse. John has a long and active history with the RCN. His previous union experience in the steel industry made the transition to RCN safety rep and steward roles a natural progression. He has also served eight years on RCN Council and a variety of RCN committees and groups. His contribution to the RCN was acknowledged with an award of merit in 2010. A former chair of the Yorkshire & the Humber Regional Board, John has recently returned to sit on the board. He is also active in the region’s retired members’ network. Newly elected, John took up his seat on the NPC National Council in January 2020.

**Cordelia Okwusogu**

Cordelia qualified as a registered nurse in Nigeria in 1965. After moving to the UK she worked as qualified midwife, gaining experience in special baby units before becoming a clinical midwifery instructor. She later worked for 15 years in nursing care of older people in south Wales. Cordelia is a former elected member sitting on the NPC National Council, having stood down in 2017 she remains active within the NPC as a member of their Minority Elders Working Party.

**Jenny Janes**

After qualifying at King’s College Hospital, Jenny held a variety of roles in care for the elderly over some 25 years, with 18 years on night duty whilst her children were small. This was followed by further training as a community nurse leading to 10 years as a district nursing sister in Peckham, London. During this time she also trained as a psychotherapist and spent 15 years variously as a counsellor in a GP practice, and as a bereavement counsellor.

Jenny has been active in the RCN for 55 years as branch member, secretary, lead steward and safety rep, and at Congress. She also spent 10 years as an RCN officer in London and South-east regions before retiring to Suffolk, continuing to be active in the RCN Suffolk Branch and the RCN NPC Network where she provides a link to feed ideas into the planning of the annual RCN retired members’ conference. Locally, Jenny is active in volunteer work with social and health-related organisations, including the local patient participation group and the community bus. As a carer for a relative with dementia she is experiencing health and social care from a different perspective, as well as managing her own health and seeing nursing from the other side.

**Role of elected RCN members at the NPC**

The role requires:

- an awareness of NPC policy and campaign issues, and participation in related NPC activities as appropriate;
- understanding of the NPC constitution and ways of working;
- attendance at NPC National Council and NPC Executive Committee meetings;
- membership of NPC working parties;
• participation in monthly teleconferences with the other RCN NPC elected members and network activists to report on their NPC meetings and activities;
• attendance at the NPC annual convention (formerly Pensioners’ Parliament);
• producing a quarterly newsletter on their activities for network members;
• planning and delivering a network fringe event at RCN Congress;
• contributing to the planning of the annual conference for retired RCN members.

You can make contact with any of your elected network members by contacting Jenny Lillywhite on 0207 647 3855/ jenny.lillywhite@rcn.org.uk.

NPC Publications

Visit the NPC website for its latest publications, policy briefings and campaign bulletins.

Updates and information are also regularly posted on the RCN NPC Network Facebook.

Events

3rd Annual RCN Retired Members’ Conference

The next annual RCN retired members’ conference is scheduled to be held on Wednesday, 17 June 2020 (11.00-15.00) at RCN headquarters in London.

To register your interest, contact Wendy Irwin, RCN Diversity and Equalities Lead at wendy.irwin@rcn.org.uk.

Report from the NPC National Council

Your four elected RCN representatives attended the NPC National Council meeting on 10 January 2020.

There was considerable debate around the withdrawal of the free TV licence for the over 75 year olds, unless the person is on pension credit. The NPC’s view was that the responsibility for the TV licence should remain with the Government, rather than the BBC, to fully and universally fund it for the over 75s.

Neil Duncan-Jordan the NPC National Officer who retired at the end of last year, was recognised for his work and long service at the NPC. He described the high esteem in which the NPC was held by a variety of important organisations and institutions. He also spoke about the NPC influencing the debate and forcing others to take a position, reflecting that the success of the NPC has often been to bring others around to their way of thinking.

A motion was put forward down by an NPC regional group on climate change. This was amended by the Council but then passed. In short, it stated that the NPC congratulates young people on recognising the importance of the issue and notes that the NPC will support young campaigners for change.
**NPC Annual Pensioners Convention**

Campaigners will gather at the Southport Theatre and Convention Centre for the NPC’s three-day Annual Convention (formerly Pensioners’ Parliament) which runs from 2 - 4 June 2020. Although at a new location, the event will start with an opening rally and include a number of expert speakers. Days two and three will include sessions on a wide range of issues of concern to older people such as pensions, social care, transport and housing. Last year, over 550 delegates picked up a huge amount of useful information from a wide range of speakers, as well as being able to give their own views and pose questions to the panels. Tickets are priced at £10 for the full event or £5 for one day. Booking forms are available on the [NPC website](https://npcuk.org) or by contacting the NPC at info@npcuk.org / 020 7837 6622.

**RCN Congress**

Your RCN NPC network representatives and activists have been working with submitting entities to share information and support relevant Congress agenda item submissions. It is encouraging to see that intergenerational fairness and social care are among the [topics for debate](https://npcuk.org).

**RCN NPC Network Facebook Group**

Join the RCN NPC Network Facebook group and receive regular updates and information on a range of pensioner issues. Go to the [RCN NPC Network Facebook](https://facebook.com) page for easy instructions on how to join. Only members of the RCN NPC Network are eligible to join.

**Contribute to the newsletter**

If you would like to contribute to this newsletter or share your thoughts on the issues raised, please contact the [Newsletter Editor, David Briggs](mailto: djbriggsrcn@gmail.com) at djbriggsrcn@gmail.com.