



**Keeping RCN members up to date with what's going on across the Northern Region**

## **A decision which will haunt our society**

***Regional director Sarah Dodsworth reflects on the Government's decision to slash local councils' public health budgets***

Public health services are fundamental to a healthy, well-functioning society. They prevent more serious situations occurring. Cutting the public health budget is a short-sighted, false economy, unfortunately that is just what the Government is doing. In January 2016, the North East and Cumbria will see over £14 million of cuts taken from frontline public health services.

The dust is still settling on where the axe will fall in our region but there can be no doubt that these cuts will immediately affect the most vulnerable in our society. Local councils are currently facing the unhappy task of deciding what proportion of cuts will be imposed on services like school nursing, suicide prevention, domestic violence prevention or wider mental health support, including



befriending services for lonely, older people. Public health services are often low-key, daily grind services like drug and alcohol cessation services, sexual health advice and guidance and weight management. Poor, vulnerable women use public health services more than men.

The RCN lobbied for local authority cuts to public health budgets to be dropped in the Comprehensive Spending Review revealed by George Osborne in his Autumn Statement on 25 November. Unfortunately this call was ignored.

Initial estimates by the Faculty of Public Health are that the knock-on cost to the NHS nationally could be in excess of £1 billion. The decision to make the proposed level of cuts undermines what the government has previously stated as one of its main aims for the health care model – that prevention will be key.

## Win prizes in our Care on Camera nursing photography competition



The RCN is calling for entries for its new photography competition, 'Care on Camera', launched to celebrate the College's centenary year. It aims to capture the innovation and diversity of the modern day nursing profession. Open to everyone, the RCN is asking people to record nursing life as it happens in its many diverse settings and communities. Winners will be chosen by an expert judging panel to include TV and theatre actress Tamzin Outhwaite. Winners will be announced at the annual RCN Congress in June 2016 with the fifty shortlisted entries then going on to form a touring exhibition, travelling through schools, libraries, and various



health settings around the UK. There are cash prizes of £1000, £500 and £250 for the winning entries. The collection will ultimately become part of the RCN Archive, providing a historical record of nursing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Care on Camera is the start of a yearlong programme of celebrations for the RCN centenary in 2016. **The closing date for entries is 29 February 2016.**

Visit <http://www.rcn100photo.org.uk/> for more.

## RCN Awards 2016



Do you know an inspiring individual deserving of recognition? Nominate them for a prestigious RCN award. Categories include RCN Fellowship and Honorary Fellowship – recognising individuals who have made an impact on the nursing profession; RCN Award of Merit – acknowledging outstanding voluntary service to the RCN; and RCN representative of the year – rewarding accredited RCN reps who have gone the extra mile. **The deadline for nominations is 8 February.** To

get started please visit <https://www.rcn.org.uk/get-involved/rcn-awards> for more information.

## RCN Foundation grants available

The Kershaw Family Bursary for health care assistants and assistant practitioners is now open and applications are **welcomed until 21 January 2016**. The bursary provides up to £500 to assist career development. It will fund any activity that will improve quality of care for patients. RCN Foundation Health Care Assistant Awards of up to £250 are available for funding course fees, study day fees or awarding body registration fees, and various other grants and bursaries are also available. See [http://www.rcnfoundation.org.uk/how\\_we\\_can\\_help/bursary\\_schemes](http://www.rcnfoundation.org.uk/how_we_can_help/bursary_schemes) for more details.

## Retired nurses' group meeting

All retired members are welcome to come along to the next meeting of the retired nurses' group on 1 February 2016 from 1pm until 4pm. Book a place by emailing [northern.region@rcn.org.uk](mailto:northern.region@rcn.org.uk) or call Collette Ross on 0191 511 5809.

## New website

The RCN has launched its new website, which includes new RCN Northern pages with details of all the RCN events taking place in your area. Take a look at [www.rcn.org.uk/northern](http://www.rcn.org.uk/northern)