



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

South Tees trust shelves shift changes following partnership working success

Working in partnership, the RCN and other health unions have secured a significant outcome for staff at South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Staff and unions had voiced concerns about changes to shift patterns which, if implemented, would effectively have required nurses and health care assistants to work for an extra six hours per month to make up for unpaid breaks added to the rota.

News of the outcome came last Friday when trust Chief Executive Siobhan McArdle sent a special briefing to all staff, saying: "It has become very apparent that not only are we highly unlikely to reach agreement on the planned introduction of the shift pattern changes through our current consultation process, but that we are also stuck in an unconstructive conversation that is not adding value to our organisation in terms of patient care, experience and outcome. Director of Nursing Gill Hunt and I have now taken the decision to close consultation on the proposed changes to nursing shift patterns and postpone the introduction of the changes in June."



"This is a fantastic result," said Roaqah Shaher, lead RCN representative and chair of staff side (pictured). "Everyone is so relieved, the atmosphere at work this weekend was really uplifted and there were smiles everywhere. I want to thank all the staff members for hanging in there and supporting the RCN and the other unions throughout the whole of this consultation period. This was only possible because we all stood together to oppose something that was recognized by the management as being ultimately unfair on hard-working staff."

Health unions undertook their own consultations with members to ensure that management understood exactly how the trust's proposals were both unworkable and unfair.

Roaqah added: "The potential damage to both patient safety and staff morale has also been averted and this is to be welcomed. As a result of the consultation and constructive counterproposals put forward by health unions, staff side have agreed to work together to resolve the longstanding issues of health funding shortages in a way that is both safe for patients and staff. Unions are committed to ensuring that nurses and other staff are treated fairly, and this outcome shows the value of trade union membership."

Happy International Nurses' Day from the Royal College of Nursing

The RCN Northern region would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all that you do as nurses and health care assistants.

“Nursing staff work tirelessly to care for patients,” said Northern Regional Director Glenn Turp. “We hope that on 12 May – International Nurses' Day and Florence Nightingale's birthday – you get a chance to stop and consider the incredible difference you make to the lives of your patients, their families and for society as a whole. It is a profession to feel truly proud of and we are proud to support you in it. Happy Nurses' Day from the RCN.”

We are interested in any International Nurses' Day initiatives so please do tweet photos of any celebrations to [@theRCN](https://twitter.com/theRCN) and [@RCNNorthern](https://twitter.com/RCNNorthern) and use the hashtag #thankanurse.



Newcastle conference - HCAs: shaping the present, building the future

23 May at 9:30 am – 5.00 pm- County Mercure Hotel, Neville Street, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 5DF



If you are an HCA or an assistant practitioner then the RCN Northern region is putting on a free conference which promises to provide a continuing professional development opportunity for you to network and learn.

You don't have to be an RCN member to take advantage of this event. The conference is open to members and non-members alike so please tell colleagues who you think would enjoy it. Don't miss out - the programme is packed with useful learning.

Come along to familiarise yourself with the full potential of what the RCN offers its health care assistant and assistant practitioner members - including its online First Steps for HCAs programme and substantial online library resources. You will hear from an inspirational senior health care assistant who has undergone RCN training and become the lead steward in his organisation.

There are also sessions on the RCN's Top Tips for HCAs initiative, accountability and delegation and the Care Certificate. To register for the conference, fill in this form and send it back to northern.region@rcn.org.uk.

RCN rep goes the extra mile to support colleagues with revalidation

An RCN steward who works as an assistant practitioner at County Durham and Darlington has been praised for going the extra mile to ensure that his colleagues are supported through the new NMC revalidation process. Senior health care assistant Kevin Morley has produced a suite of resources to help support staff at County Durham and Darlington's Community Matrons District Nursing Team.

"Kevin has put all the information his colleagues need about where to go and what to do to revalidate their registration up onto a communal noticeboard at work," said RCN Officer Heather Whitton, who mentors Kevin in his role as RCN steward. "It is really excellent work and all the more remarkable because he isn't a registrant himself," she continued.

Several colleagues in his team are due to hand in their portfolios shortly, and Kevin has helped them by going through a checklist detailing what their portfolios should include. He has also helped to create a 360-degree feedback communications tool so that they can get the most out of testimonials and feedback.

"If they follow these steps it will enhance their portfolio and demonstrate how they work. Some people don't find web-based resources that accessible, so I've made some available offline in our workplace. My resources take colleagues through how to do their reflection, look at books and articles they've read and reference them properly. I sat with them and went through it all to show them what they needed to do," said Kevin. "I love helping colleagues and I'm always there for support if anyone needs anything," he continued. "I point them in the right direction and make sure they get the best of whatever they need."

Interested in helping your colleagues? Become an RCN representative...

Becoming an RCN rep gives you the chance to make a real difference to your patients, the working lives of yourself and your colleagues - and even the future of nursing. If you are an RCN member and a registered nurse or a health care assistant, you can apply to become an RCN steward, safety representative or learning representative. Being a rep is rewarding but can be challenging so you need to be committed to the aims, objectives and activities of the RCN. As an RCN representative, you are fully supported by RCN staff and by a network of other representatives throughout the UK; specially trained, with your continuing learning and development needs met by the RCN; legally entitled to reasonable paid time off for your learning and development and rep duties; encouraged to access a specialist area on the RCN's website, which contains a wide range of resources; kept up-to-date with news and information via your own monthly newsletter, Activate; invited to attend national conferences and events; entitled to a 25 per cent discount off the member rate for RCN conferences organised solely by the RCN; eligible to receive a special RCN award that recognises your hard work and achievements. Visit www.rcn.org.uk/get-involved/rcn-reps to find out more and get started on a new, exciting pathway.

Student funding survey open – do you agree with nursing student debt?

The Government has launched a consultation on plans to implement loans and tuition fees for nursing, midwifery and allied health professional students in England from August 2017.

The RCN will respond to the consultation, but we need your views to make this as strong as possible. The survey will take up to 15 minutes to complete and is anonymous. It closes at 11pm on Sunday 29 May. Please share the link with your colleagues www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/wstudentfunding/.

Northumbria Healthcare receives outstanding CQC report



The Care Quality Commission has rated Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust as outstanding across a wide breadth of services and areas.

RCN Northern region Operational Manager Peta Clark said: "This is a remarkable achievement. It is a pleasant surprise to be looking at some good news in relation to the NHS. The CQC has specifically highlighted the clinical care as being outstanding, which is a huge tribute to commitment and dedication of our RCN members because ultimately it is the frontline nursing staff that make all the difference to the care patients receive. On the back of this, we now hope that North Tyneside council will revisit its decision to cut the amount of money it allocates to Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to provide it with children and youth services for 0-19 year olds. Public health cuts are false economies, and cost the NHS more, further down the line. If this level of care is to be maintained, it requires chief executives across the NHS to speak out about receiving sufficient funding in the various financial settlements they receive through contracts and through central government".



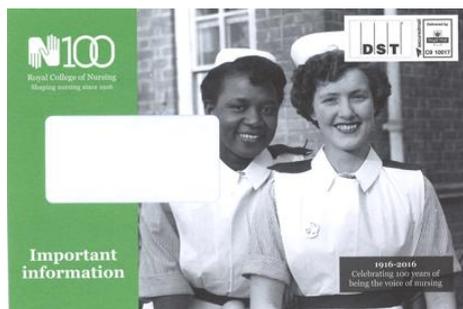
The impact of the EU on nursing in the UK – a factual guide



The RCN has produced a factual guide detailing how membership of the European Union affects nursing in the UK. We are not taking a formal position on the 23 June referendum but you may find it useful to read our [factual guide](#) to see what impact the EU has on the nursing profession.

Recently moved jobs or address? Please update your details with the RCN

There could be a year's free membership in it for you.



To celebrate our centenary, the RCN is giving away 100 free memberships to randomly selected members throughout 2016. Be sure to check your post carefully for an envelope that looks like the one pictured left as there is a time limit within which you can claim your prize.

For more information on this and other centenary initiatives you can visit www.rcn.org.uk/centenary.

How to update your details: go to my.rcn.org.uk/my-details

Please update your employer details as well – it's important to us to be able to monitor changes to our members' terms and conditions as the health service goes through challenging transitions.

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For TextDirect: first dial 18001. Calls may be recorded. Mon-Fri 8am-9pm, Sat 8am-5pm, Sun 9am-5pm. The Royal College of Nursing acts as an Introducer Appointed Representative to the Liverpool Victoria group of companies for General Insurance.

The history of the Cumberland Infirmary - by Julie Bowman

The Cumberland Infirmary has had an illustrious history since the inception of nurse training on the premises in 1888. The hospital opened in 1841 with 40 beds and a meagre staff, managed by an old pipe-smoking lady.



Staff at the Cumberland Infirmary in 1896

At the end of the 19th and through to the 20th century, nurses led a strict, almost monastic life. They worked in poor conditions, sleeping in bedrooms attached to the wards, until in 1908 a new nurses' home was built with 40 single rooms and such luxuries as a reading room.

The new home was built thanks to the endeavours of Dr Henry Barnes and mainly local patronage and fundraising efforts, including bazaars and a football match between Newcastle United and Carlisle United.

It is not known who won on the day but the proceeds were given to the Infirmary.

The home's opening ceremony was conducted by Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, the daughter of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert (pictured right).

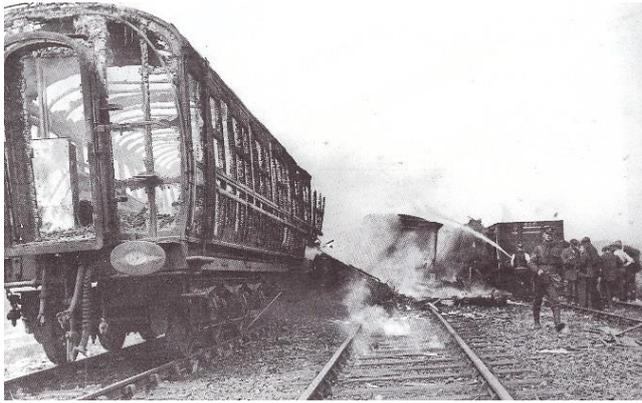


The Infirmary produced some excellent nurses who made valued contributions to care, particularly during the war years and at other times of extreme crisis; unfortunately many of their actions have been forgotten.

Carlisle nurse training was influenced by Florence Nightingale and her School of Nursing. Two nurses who trained under her auspices travelled to Carlisle and their influence on the hospital's training school was palpable – Carlisle being recorded among a handful of hospitals nationally who can claim the accolade of being directly descended from the original Nightingale School of Nursing.

On the 22 May 1915 the infamous Quintinshill rail disaster took place which triggered a medical emergency the likes of which had never been seen in Carlisle, nor fortunately in the majority of hospitals in the UK. A troop train packed with soldiers of the Royal Scots regiment who were on their way to participate in the Gallipoli campaign collided with a local passenger train. The wreckage from the crash spilled out over on to the main line where it was struck seconds later by the midnight express on its way from Euston to Glasgow. The resultant carnage saw the death toll rise rapidly to what is believed 227 dead with 246 people injured. It was and remains Britain's worst railway accident.

It is reported that at the time the Matron of the Cumberland Infirmary working with the House Physician in charge on that day prepared for an influx of patients.



Quintinshill rail disaster 1915

It was work that proved to be pioneering. There were some of the earliest instances of patients being triaged to determine the best treatment, with the hospital under Matron's authority working to clear space in the hospital, putting some patients two to a bed and moving others to different hospitals and nursing homes.

The hospital's response to this disaster and the response techniques that were used would later be documented in nursing literature worldwide.

Hospital staff had been taken to the scene in horse driven carts and had very little in the way of equipment.

Janet Stephens (née Dorsan) was born in 1895 in the village of Haverigg. During the First World War she trained as a nurse at Carlisle's Cumberland Infirmary. In May 1915, still in training, she was summoned to the scene of this major railway accident.

When Janet did speak to her family about the disaster it was about the hopelessness she felt due to the scale of it. The casualties were just wandering around or sitting down in the surrounding fields. They had to "make do and mend", amputating limbs on the spot to try to save lives. They were assisted by many brave people including nurses from Cumberland Infirmary, the Red Cross and elsewhere.

It was reported that some carriages were on fire but there were still living men inside. The living and the dead were in one confused heap. Doctors crawled into the wreckage to give chloroform and at one point Dr Edwards was compelled to use an ordinary carpenter's saw to remove one trapped soldier's limbs. As Dr Matthews applied the chloroform mask to this poor man it caught fire as it was so close to the flames. The actual work of the amputation lasted half a minute. Those who could be rescued were taken by train to the hospital through a siding near Carr's Biscuits works.

Nurses went down to the siding to help carry the men on stretchers. There were many instances of heroism and the hospital itself treated approximately 136 injured people alone on that fateful morning. Many of these poor men died in transit or at the clearing where the Nurses were present to assist them.

The nursing that day truly was amazing. These young nurses would never have seen anything like it and would hope never to again. They didn't have the equipment we have today and they had to make the best of their nursing skills and do what they could: so many forgotten heroisms. Nurses were trained to run, manage and organise hospitals. They were in charge of ordering stores and provisions and the cleanliness and hygiene of the environments in which they worked.

During the First World War, Fusehill Street, formerly the poorhouse, became the main base of the city's military hospital. It subsequently became the City General Hospital and is now part of the campus of the University of Cumbria. Other facilities such as Brook Street School and Newtown School were also commandeered to cope with the large influx of soldiers, particularly throughout 1918 when the casualty lists were growing.

Three Australian infantrymen died and were buried in Carlisle alongside other members of the Armed Forces, in particular the Border Regiment. All but one lie in the Commonwealth War section in Carlisle Cemetery.



1918 war casualties at Fusehill Military Hospital – the two soldiers with the ANZAC hats on the front are thought to be Corporal Leonard Chase and William Walder

33-year old Corporal Leonard Chase was a member of the Australian Imperial Force. 21-year old William Walder was his compatriot. Both of these young men were treated at Fusehill Military Hospital before being transferred to Newtown School which was in fact a recognised military war hospital.

Leonard Chase had injuries to his back. He was paraplegic and had extensive bedsores. William Walder was no less fortunate. He had suffered the consequences of infection in the trenches which led to rheumatic fever and subsequently rheumatic heart disease. For months they were nursed at Fusehill Street. However at the end of August the decision was made to send them both to Newtown.

They both went together so far away from home with no family or no one to care for them apart from some brilliant nurses, one of whom was nurse Josephine Mesney Cherry, a night sister at Fusehill Street. She had cared for Leonard since his admission. She was clearly devoted to his welfare. Prior to his transfer she asked the Matron at the time if she could accompany Leonard and she stayed with him there watching over him day and night until he died.

Letters about Leonard exist from Nurse Cherry, the Matron and other sisters of the time. Nurse Cherry wrote to his family and sent his parents a very emotional letter. They must have felt some comfort in the fact that he had nurses like Josephine who cared for him to the end.



Nursing education pioneer Nancy Roper teaching students on an introductory course in 1954

Of course, our history did not end with an account of wars and other crises. As I recounted earlier our training school is direct descendant of the Nightingale School of Nurses and many of its amazing tutors who have been recognised worldwide for their academic contribution to nursing, in particular

Nancy Roper, renowned still throughout the world as the pioneer in nurse education.

The research goes on. There is plenty for us to find and a lot of work to do. With this in mind I wonder if any members would be interested in working with me and forming a Cumberland Infirmary history forum so that we can commemorate the work of the individuals above and also the ongoing work within the nursing profession within our hospital and elsewhere. We cannot afford to lose or neglect such a valuable and incredible history of care that has been delivered by generations of us and hopefully more to come.

In 2016 the Royal College of Nursing is celebrating its centenary. It is therefore time to take stock of the archived and documented story of the Cumberland Infirmary, of which we should be extremely proud.

You can contact Julie by email to find out more or get involved: Julie.bowman@ncuh.nhs.uk



Nancy Roper welcoming new students to the infirmary

The Mary Seacole awards for 2016/17 are open until 20 May



You have until 20 May to get your application in for a Mary Seacole Award, and be recognised for your outstanding work in black and ethnic minority (BME) communities.

There are two awards:

- leadership awards of up to £12,500 (intended to enhance effective leadership and communication skills)
- development awards of up to £6,250 (to develop leadership skills).

Further information is available [online](#)

Mary Seacole was a Jamaican nurse who cared for soldier on the frontline of the Crimean war. Find out more about her [here](#).

Care on camera competition – voting is open until 31 May

Voting is open until 31 May for the RCN’s centenary nursing photography competition, Care on Camera. We need your help to pick a ‘People’s Choice’ winner from fifty shortlisted images, which will then form a touring exhibition around the UK. A few examples are below.

Please visit www.rcn100photo.org.uk/events/royal-college-nursing-100/finalists to vote.



RCN Northern Region Events

Find out what's going on across the RCN Northern region

For a full list of Northern region events, visit www.rcn.org.uk/northern/northern-events

Email northern.region@rcn.org.uk to book your place unless otherwise stated.

Tuesday 17 May [Northumberland, Tyne and Wear branch meeting](#) - at 10.00 am – 12.00 pm, RCN Northern region office, Avalon House, St Catherine's Court, Sunderland Enterprise Park, SR5 3XJ.

Wednesday 18 May [County Durham and Darlington branch meeting](#) - at 9.30 am – 11.30 am, RCN Northern region office, Avalon House, St Catherine's Court, Sunderland Enterprise Park, SR5 3XJ.

Wednesday 18 May [Tees Valley branch meeting](#) - at 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm, RCN Northern region office, Avalon House, St Catherine's Court, Sunderland Enterprise Park, SR5 3XJ.

Thursday 19 May [Cumbria branch meeting](#) –12.30pm – 2.30 pm, Newton Rigg College, Penrith, Cumbria CA11 0AH. (Preceded by a learning and development session for reps at 10.30 am)

Monday 23 May – HCA conference, [HCAs: shaping our present, building our future](#), Newcastle 9.30 am – 4.00 pm, County Mercure Hotel, Neville Street, Newcastle NE1 5DF.

Wednesday 1 June – [Open session of the Northern regional board meeting](#), 12.00 pm – 2.00 pm, Board room, RCN Northern region office, Avalon House, St Catherine's Court, Sunderland Enterprise Park, SR5 3XJ. All members are welcome. Lunch is included.

Thursday 23 June - [Multicultural nurses' group](#) - RCN Northern region office, Avalon House, St Catherine's Court, Sunderland Enterprise Park, SR5 3XJ.

Wednesday 6 July – [Centenary celebrations of nursing excellence and innovation](#), 9.30 am - 4.00 pm, County Mercure Hotel, Neville Street, Newcastle NE1 5DF.

The RCN is 100 this year and to mark the occasion the RCN Northern and Yorkshire and the Humber regions are teaming up to put on a conference to celebrate excellence and innovation.



Members are invited to come along, listen to inspiring speakers and renew their enthusiasm for the profession. Come and help us celebrate.

The conference is free to RCN members, and you can join when you book. Book your free place [online](#) or call 02920 54 64 60 and quote event number 2067.

Wednesday 3 August – [Open session of the RCN Northern regional Board meeting](#), from around lunchtime - 2.00 pm at the RCN Northern region office RCN Northern region office, Avalon House, St Catherine's Court, Sunderland Enterprise Park, SR5 3XJ.