



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

Carrying a torch for nursing

The RCN Northern region team recently participated in [#RCNWalk100](#), a unique health and wellbeing initiative celebrating 100 years of the RCN. Over 2016, RCN staff and activists will collectively cover the 1,500 miles between each RCN office around the UK while carrying a replica of the lantern that Florence Nightingale used in the Crimean war.



Cecilia Anim meets the Angel of the North



The RCNWalk100 Northern region team

RCN President Cecilia Anim (pictured at the Angel of the North) joined the team (pictured right at Hylton Castle in Sunderland) on the walk, which raised money for the RCN Foundation. “It was a fantastic experience,” said Cecilia, a clinical nurse specialist in sexual and reproductive health based in London. “I’ve always wanted to see the Angel of the North and the walk was for a great cause - the RCN Foundation supports nurses, midwives, health care assistants and nursing students.”

(See www.rcnfoundation.org.uk – a £5000 professional bursary has just opened)

Brexit and its implications for nursing

The result of the referendum on Britain's future in Europe could have profound effects for the NHS and nursing. The referendum has brought particular instability for nursing colleagues who originally moved here from other parts of the EU and it may have wider implications for other international nurse recruits. The immigration rules which will result from our new relationship with Europe remain unclear. The NMC has categorically said there will be no immediate impact on registration.



The RCN values all our members, whether originally from the UK, Europe or further afield. The NHS relies heavily on the contribution of health care professionals from around the world and none of that will change with recent events. The RCN will do everything we can to support European members through this time and we will continue to speak up for the magnificent contribution made by staff from right across our continent.

It is not yet clear what the vote to leave the EU will mean in practice. The NHS was used in the argument by both sides throughout the campaign. The RCN remains committed to fighting for the resources and support to run a national health service that is free at the point of use for all.

RCN Direct has produced an advice guide: *Brexit - the implications for EEA workers, students and family members*: www.rcn.org.uk/get-help/rcn-advice/brexit-implications

Hate incidents

There has been a worrying spike in the number of hate incidents reported since the EU referendum result. The rise in post-Brexit hate crime peaked at 60 per cent, and last month was still 14 per cent higher than normal.



“It is completely unacceptable,” said RCN Northern regional director Glenn Turp. “We all have a responsibility to make sure that we take positive action to address inequalities, bullying, racism and discrimination wherever they occur. If you or a colleague are a victim of abuse, whether it is from patients, the public, or someone you work with, then the RCN will stand with you.”

You can report hate crime online to the police via www.report-it.org. If the crime isn't an emergency, call 101 or [contact your local police](#). If you need support or guidance, our trained advisers can help - you can contact RCN Direct on 0345 772 6100. You can also read our advice on discrimination www.rcn.org.uk/get-help/rcn-advice/discrimination.

What counts as a hate incident?

Hate incidents are defined as any behaviour that is perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by prejudice or hostility based upon the victim's real or perceived race/ethnicity or national origin; sexual orientation; religion, faith or belief; disability; or gender identity. Hate incidents can take many forms including verbal abuse, insulting gestures, offensive messages as well as physical assault and damage to property. Your employer should have a clear and up-to-date procedure for identifying and recording hate incidents, and supporting staff who have suffered them. It should encourage all members of staff to be aware and ready to report any incidents, and check that existing policies include the term nationality or national origin, as many staff who have been impacted by the recent spike in reported incidents may not recognise themselves as belonging to a distinct ethnic group.

RCN calls for above-inflation pay increase for nursing staff

This year the RCN joined forces with other health unions to call on the NHS pay review body (PRB) to recommend the Government awards NHS staff an above-inflation pay rise.



Janet Davies, Chief Executive & General Secretary of the RCN said: "The ongoing erosion of nurses' real-terms pay is unsustainable and puts patient care at risk. Trusts are already struggling to recruit, and with an ageing workforce will find it increasingly difficult to persuade nurses to keep working. This recommendation is not just about treating staff fairly for the work they are doing. It is about getting a grip on workforce planning in the NHS and helping trusts to recruit and retain the staff they need to provide safe patient care."

The unions' joint submission to the PRB is calling for a pay increase that begins to bring pay back to historic levels, as well as a return to UK-wide pay scales.

Vote in the RCN presidential elections by 16 November



An election is due to take place for the RCN President. Mike Travis is standing against the incumbent, Cecilia Anim. The term of office is for two years beginning 1 January 2017 and ending 31 December 2018. Voting is now open and closes at 5.00 pm on Wednesday 16 November - please return your vote so it is received by then. RCN members were sent their voting paper along with the October issue of their RCN Bulletin. If you can't find it, just email elections@rcn.org.uk and we will send you a replacement. For more candidate information visit <https://www.rcn.org.uk/presidentialelections>.

In profile: Annie Topping



I'm Director of Nursing, Quality and Patient Safety at NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group. There are two aspects to my role: one is to oversee and assure the patient safety and quality of all NHS Northumberland CCG's commissioned services, including hospitals, the ambulance trust, and mental health, and I'm increasingly getting involved in primary care too. The other aspect is to provide professional leadership to practice nurses in Northumberland, supporting and facilitating their education and development. As a commissioning nurse director my responsibility is to looking at the whole health and care system and not just individual organisations.

The world is changing around us with the onset of health and social care integration so I think the main challenge for nursing is how we face that change. The voice of the nursing professional needs to be very clear and strong. We should be influencing and shaping rather than following, because if we're not careful things will just happen around us and to us. We need to make sure that we are in the driving seat to effect change, not just be affected by it. It's not just commissioners who can do that; frontline nurses providing patient care have first-hand understanding of patients' needs and the impact of changes on services. This makes them well placed to drive changes at a care pathway level, cutting across organisational boundaries.

The most important lessons I've learned in my career are to listen carefully to people around me and value different opinions and contributions, recognizing diversity and differences. Being from a BME background I want to celebrate different nurses from different backgrounds coming together and what we bring from our own different cultures. Our diversity is what make us so powerful as a profession. My favourite thing about nursing is seeing the difference we make to patients. I'm an ITU nurse by background and I know how much the support and comfort we can provide means to patients and their families. It's all about making a difference to people's lives. My least favourite thing about nursing is that we are the biggest workforce in the NHS but a lot of the conversation is still very medically orientated, so that's frustrating; I want us to be equal partners around the table.

If I were starting out again I might go down the nurse consultant route, which didn't exist at the time. I think a clinical leadership role would offer the best of both worlds. Outside of nursing, I've been riding for 20 years. I have a horse called Molly. Riding her helps me relax and takes my mind off work, so I often go out for a long hack with my horse to unwind. If I were stranded on a desert island the music I would bring is Pachelbel's Canon in D. I don't really read any books for leisure - I'm currently studying for an LLM in Medical Law at Northumbria University Newcastle so that keeps me occupied.

RCN seeks exceptional members to nurture as reps

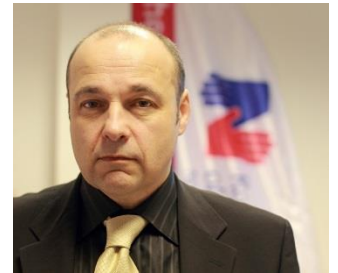
As some of our most valued and experienced representatives reach retirement age, the RCN Northern region is looking for further exceptional individuals to invest in.

“Representatives play a vital part in the activity of the RCN,” says Senior RCN Officer Greg Canning. “They are remarkable people who more than earn the respect they receive for their roles supporting members.”

What’s in it for RCN representatives?

“Volunteering as a Royal College of Nursing representative doesn’t just benefit your colleagues and your employer,” explains Greg. “It can have major advantages for your own development, too.”

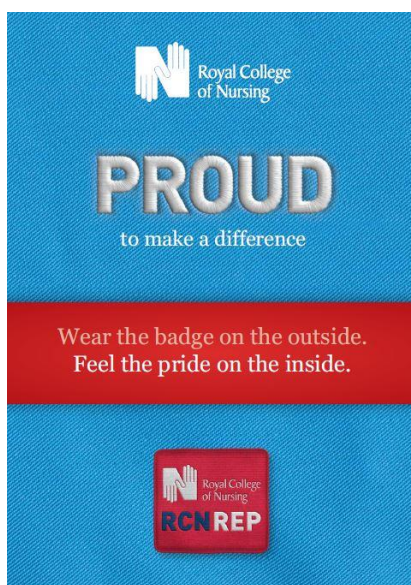
In these days of pressured budgets, nursing workforce shortages and below-inflation salaries, you could be forgiven for thinking that taking on an extra role over and above your substantive contract is purely for angelic, superhuman philanthropists.



In fact becoming an RCN representative can be the perfect way to boost your career, nurturing skills, experience and relationships which can help you get on in the workplace.

Research has shown that those who take on a voluntary role benefit from individual mentoring, increased confidence, self-awareness, creativity, enhanced communication abilities, enhanced networking and relationship-building opportunities, better ability to have difficult conversations, better workload management ability, better team-building ability, and enhanced professional knowledge.

Altruism is certainly a major motivating force behind what union representatives do. They lend their support and expertise to nursing staff encountering all sorts of challenges and often that backup provides others with the strength and knowledge they need to face their issues head-on.



However, the relationship is not a one-way street. Representatives benefit from paid time off to fulfil their union role, learning and development programme offering strings to their bow in a range of topics from questioning and influencing to self-care, from being inclusive to legal rights.

If you think you could fit the bill, why not get in contact with senior regional officer Greg Canning via email: northern.region@rcn.org.uk for a one-to-one chat about how you might best take it forward.

Alternatively you can explore the RCN's [Become an RCN rep](#) webpages.

What are the benefits of being an RCN representative?

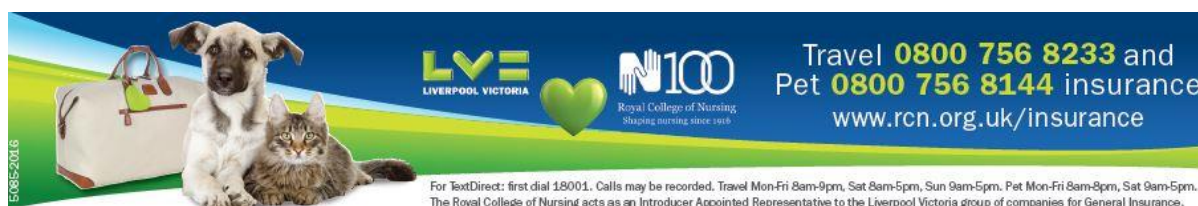
As an RCN representative, you are:



- > 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.

Did you know reps save the NHS millions?

Reduced staff turnover and boosted staff morale resulting from union activity actually generates costs savings of at least £100 million a year across the UK - around £5.5 million in the North East and Cumbria – see table below.

Trust within the RCN Northern region	Minimum NHS saving (in £s)
City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust	354,405
County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust	528,258
Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust	244,803
Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	891,768
NHS Darlington CCG	86,000
NHS North Durham CCG	172,000
NHS South Tees CCG	31,438
NHS Sunderland CCG	2,835
North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust	191,977
North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust	355,780
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust	459,284
Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust	580,483
South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	589,502
South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust	299,346
Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust	435,663
Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	268,939
North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust	258,889



Travel **0800 756 8233** and
 Pet **0800 756 8144** insurance
www.rcn.org.uk/insurance

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

Nominations now open for RCNi Nurse Awards 2017

If you know anyone who deserves to be recognised for their outstanding work, please give them a boost by nominating them for the RCNi Nurse Awards.



Last year' winner Venetia Wynter-Blyth

You can also nominate yourself for the prestigious accolades available, including RCN Nurse of the Year. This year for the Patient's Choice award, RCNi are seeking 12 finalists, one each from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and one from each of the nine RCN regions in England.

“This regional guarantee is an exciting new development for the awards,” said Glenn Turp, RCN Northern region regional director. “It means that the Northern region will be represented on the final shortlist, and at the glittering awards ceremony on the evening of 5 May 2017.”

Last year Venetia Wynter-Blyth (pictured) won the Nurse of the Year Award for her holistic approach to getting patients both physically and psychologically fit for surgery.

Lone working publications

[Personal safety when working alone: guidance for members working in health and social care](#) (to order quote reference number 005 716)

This short guide has been developed for members who work alone. It also contains a checklist for RCN safety representatives who work on negotiating improvements to workplace safety for members and nurse managers who manage lone working staff. For those wanting more in-depth information on lone working, there is a list of sources of further information in the back of the guide.

[Keeping safe when working alone](#) (to order quote reference number 005 730)

This pocket guide will help prepare you for lone working. It provides a checklist to run through before a home visit, along with what to look out for whilst on a visit and what to report afterwards. Remember, The NMC Code states that you should take account of your own personal safety as well as those you care for.

These documents are part of the *Healthy Workplace, Healthy You* campaign.

They are available to order from RCN Direct publications team (0345 772 6100).

All RCN publications can also be downloaded from the publications section of the RCN website at www.rcn.org.uk/publications.



RCN Northern Region Events

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

Let's talk about end of life care: Newcastle workshop – 19 October



This workshop on 19 October will provide opportunities to discuss what good end of life care should look like. Worth four CPD points, it will address ways of initiating conversations about end of life planning that could be useful in all areas of nursing.

For more information please visit

www.rcn.org.uk/news-and-events/events/eolc-newcastle

Open session of RCN Board – 19 October

All members are welcome to attend the [open session](#) of our next board meeting in Sunderland on 19 October, which includes lunch. To register your interest email northern.region@rcn.org.uk

RCN Centenary celebration tea party – 18 November



RCN office, Sunderland.

All are very welcome to book a place at our centenary tea party at 2:00 pm on Friday 18 November at our office in Sunderland.

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

Cumbria branch annual general meeting – 3 November

Ullswater Room, Newton Rigg College, Newton Rigg, Penrith, Cumbria CA11 0AH

If you can only attend one branch meeting a year, please make it [this one](#). Branch executive positions are up for election, and by voting you will help shape the strategic direction of the branch's work over the coming year at this crucial time for the future of Cumbria's health service. You are also invited to consider standing for a branch executive position. The branch needs a president, chair, vice chair, secretary, treasurer, and one further branch executive member. Further detail on the branch roles can be found here: www.rcn.org.uk/about-us/how-the-rcn-is-governed/our-governance-documents