

**Editor: Jeannett Martin, RCN South West Regional Director**



Practice Matters is our newsletter for nurses and health care assistants working in general practice in the south west. Welcome to our latest issue.

I hope you find it useful and enjoy it. Please do send any feedback you may have or ideas for content to [southwestern.region@rcn.org.uk](mailto:southwestern.region@rcn.org.uk)

## RCN NEWS

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### Pensions talks in Devon and Cornwall

Are you thinking about retirement? If you are looking to retire in the next five to ten years, you would do well to attend one of the following free events. RCN pensions expert Gerry O'Dwyer is coming to the South West to talk to Devon and Cornwall practice nurses about options within the NHS Pension Scheme.



He will be accompanied by Lighthouse Financial Services adviser Adam Jones, who will talk about planning for retirement.

These events are free and aimed at practice nurses and health care assistants working in general practice in Devon and Cornwall.

The Cornwall event takes place in Bodmin from 1:00pm to 4:00pm on 1 December at Lanhydrock Hotel and Golf Club, Lostwithiel Road, Bodmin PL30 5AQ. You need to book your place via the [Cornwall Practice Nurses](http://www.rcn.org.uk/practice-nurses) website: <http://tinyurl.com/je3g6s5>.

The Devon talk takes place in Exeter on 2 December at the Gypsy Hill Hotel, Gypsy Hill Lane, Exeter EX1 3RN at 9:30 am to 12:00 pm. Book via email with [sarahhall4@nhs.net](mailto:sarahhall4@nhs.net) or [vanessa.crossey@nhs.net](mailto:vanessa.crossey@nhs.net).

### HCAs and APs can join the RCN too

Everyone knows the vital work carried out by health care assistants (HCAs) and assistant practitioners (APs) in the services provided to patients in the region and across the UK. What might not be quite so well known is the support that the RCN can offer our HCAs and practitioners, both in terms of the learning resources and help available, and competitive membership rates – as low as just £4.10 a month for the first year.

RCN South West is keen to make sure that current HCA and AP members know what we can do to help and support them in their roles. If you are already an RCN member and have colleagues who could benefit from our support, we'd like you to let them know. We don't want anyone to feel alone and unsupported. Working in a health care setting is challenging and demanding, whatever role you're in. The RCN will stand alongside you, giving you a voice and new skills, and will be there if anything goes wrong. We have a great e-learning tool, [First Steps for health care assistants](#). It's a perfect resource to dip in and out of, whether you're new to the post or refreshing your knowledge and skills.

For more information about what the RCN offers HCA and AP members go to [www.rcn.org.uk/hcas-and-aps](http://www.rcn.org.uk/hcas-and-aps).

## RCN Presidential elections



There is not long left to vote in the election for the position of RCN President.

The two candidates standing for election are Mike Travis from the North West and Cecilia Anim from the London region.

The term of office is for two years, beginning on 1 January 2017 and ending on 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 yours, just email [elections@rcn.org.uk](mailto:elections@rcn.org.uk) and we will send you a replacement.

For more candidate information visit [www.rcn.org.uk/presidentialelections](http://www.rcn.org.uk/presidentialelections).

## RCN Congress 2017

RCN Congress 2017 is taking place in Liverpool at the Arena and Convention Centre from 13 to 17 May.

The whole event is free and accredited for your CPD. The main events are the debates which span the week covering a vast agenda on a whole range of nursing issues, the fringe programme which offers a huge range of professional workshops and the exhibition.

More than that, Congress provides the perfect venue and opportunity to come together with colleagues from all over the UK to talk all things nursing.

Sign up to get information about the 2017 Congress as it is published: [www.rcn.org.uk/congress](http://www.rcn.org.uk/congress).

## Sustainability and Transformation Plans

Sustainability and transformation plans (STPs) were announced as part of the ongoing work around NHS England's *Five Year Forward View* and those we have seen will affect care currently given by NHS, voluntary and independent providers.

The aim of STPs is to bring local health and care leaders, organisations and communities together to develop plans for their localities (called 'footprint' areas) rather than focusing at the level of individual institutions.

The STPs should set out how the footprint areas will achieve the *Five Year Forward View's* aims of improved health and wellbeing, transformed quality of care delivery and sustainable finances, from October 2016 until March 2021.

The RCN is concerned that these plans are being developed without staff or representative organisations' involvement and yet the timescale for implementation is set for spring 2017.

These plans could be the biggest change to health provision since the birth of the NHS and it is vitally important that RCN members keep up to date on developments locally and where possible get involved with consultations.

Ask your employer how your service is involved with your STP and keep updated here: [www.rcn.org.uk/southwest/get-involved/integrated-care-in-england-south-west](http://www.rcn.org.uk/southwest/get-involved/integrated-care-in-england-south-west)



## Get the most from your membership

The RCN South West has network of active members who have taken on roles to represent members across the region. These representatives engage with their local branch which, supported by RCN staff, is run by members for members. RCN branches run a range of learning events as well as meetings to support members. These events are publicised locally, on our [event webpages](#) as well as in branch emailed newsletters and via social media. To find out more see our branch webpages: [www.rcn.org.uk/southwest/get-involved/branches](http://www.rcn.org.uk/southwest/get-involved/branches). For more information about RCN roles, visit [www.rcn.org.uk/get-involved](http://www.rcn.org.uk/get-involved).

## RCN South West Facebook page

We have an open [RCN South West Facebook page](#) and many branches also run their own group pages so that members can network with each other on a more local basis. Links to local pages can be found at [www.facebook.com/RCNSouthWest](http://www.facebook.com/RCNSouthWest).

## South West Practice Nursing website

If you work in Somerset, Devon or Cornwall, you might find the South West Practice Nursing website useful. <http://southwestpn.co.uk>



## Conferences coming up in 2017

The Cornwall Practice and Community Nurse conference takes place on Tuesday 25 April 2017 at the Sands Hotel, Porth, Newquay TR7 3LX. Dr Crystal Oldman, chief executive of the Queen's Nursing Institute, is the keynote speaker. Booking will be possible online later this year at [www.cornwallpn.co.uk](http://www.cornwallpn.co.uk) (courses tab).

The Devon Practice and Community Nurse conference takes place on 9 May 2017 at the [Great Barn](#), Place Barton, Exeter EX6 7QP.

The booking form and more details will be available later this year via <http://www.devonpn.co.uk>.

## Newly published this year

### [Female genital mutilation: An RCN resource for nursing and midwifery practice](#)

FGM is child abuse and the practice is illegal in the UK. The hidden nature of the crime raises serious issues and concerns in relation to the safeguarding of girls and young women. This updated publication aims to raise awareness among nurses, midwives and related health care personnel about FGM, and to provide insight and understanding of the socio-cultural, legal and health issues surrounding the practice. (Publication code 005447)

### [Reasonable adjustments](#)

This publication recognises that people with impairments are able to undertake employment and are a valuable resource. It offers guidance on how changes to work place environments and attitudes can assist in ensuring that employees with impairments have a fair opportunity to work to the best of their abilities. (Publication code 005756)

### [Fair care for trans people](#)

The RCN recognises that trans people frequently experience prejudice and discrimination. This resource is designed to help you respond to the needs of patients and clients who identify as transgender. Initially created in response to an RCN Congress resolution, this guidance has been updated following further research from other organisations. (Publication code 005575)

### [Your essential guide to NMC revalidation](#)

RCN pocket guide for nursing staff that highlights what is important in the process of revalidation. (Publication code 005380)

**To order any of these publications call RCN Direct on 0345 7726100.**

## Member discounts with RCNXtra

By using the RCN's discount service RCNXtra before you make an online or in-store purchase, you could save up to £40 a month.

RCNXtra has fantastic offers from over 3,000 of the UK's top retailers, and a system of WOW points which you can collect for further savings. Why not check out the service before Christmas? Visit [www.rcn.org.uk/membership/member-discounts](http://www.rcn.org.uk/membership/member-discounts).

