CONTINUING LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT
FOR RCN REPRESENTATIVES IN ENGLAND
January - December 2015

Wear the badge on the outside.
Feel the pride on the inside.
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SECTION 1 – CONTINUING LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR RCN REPRESENTATIVES IN ENGLAND (CL&D)

The RCN’s continuing learning and development (CL&D) opportunities provide you with support in practice through planned opportunities for you to come together with colleagues to build on your knowledge, skills and understanding as an RCN representative. It is vital to your continual development that you attend at least one CL&D event over a 12-month period but you are welcome to attend more! Discuss with your mentor/supervisor which learning events are best for you before you apply.

RCN CL&D events are mapped to the practice standards to ensure that you are clear about the intended learning outcomes and how these relate to your role in practice as an RCN representative. All events are dynamic and enabling, reflecting the principles of lifelong and adult learning and set within the workplace context of the region. Evaluations are extremely positive reflecting the high quality of the RCN’s learning and development offer.

A participant at a recent organisational change workshop said that their most significant learning was...

“being more familiar with the organisational change policy so that I can think about how to discuss ways of going forward during change within the organisation. This will ensure that RCN members are represented and that I can negotiate on their behalf”.

There is currently a range of different learning and development activities across England including workshops within local/regional events, UK joint reps conferences, and local reps branch meetings, etc.

This prospectus outlines the types of opportunities available. These include:

- regional and local CL&D events
- advanced skills CL&D workshops
- RCN L&D opportunities for members and representatives.

Dates and locations of our scheduled workshops can be found in your regional information pack, included at the back of this prospectus.

To request further copies of this prospectus, please contact your regional RCN office. Alternatively, you can download a copy at [www.rcn.org.uk/activist](http://www.rcn.org.uk/activist)
Section 2 – Regional and local CL&D events for RCN reps

SECTION 2 – REGIONAL AND LOCAL CL&D EVENTS FOR RCN REPS

Designed around key issues you encounter in the workplace these local/regional events will benefit all representatives in practice.

In all England regions CL&D is now integrated with regional development/activist events and incorporates an element of learning together with updating opportunities, information sharing and networking. The learning element of the event has been developed in collaboration locally and will be delivered by a learning and development facilitator (LDF), together with regional colleagues.

A participant at a recent workshop who attended an event across the RCN three northern regions said that....

“I realise that I have many skills to utilise differently so that I can find a way to overcome problems. The day was brilliant as it gave me the chance to network with other reps, listen to others’ experiences and to update and learn new skills.”

Another representative said that....

“I shall go back to my workplace feeling more confident to put my view across during negotiations and with a better understanding of how to use my negotiation skills. Using the real life examples was really helpful.”

To ensure topics are contemporary titles may not be available at the time of going to press but they will be made available on the RCN regional website at least six weeks before the event. Each event takes place in your RCN regional office.

Dates and locations of all scheduled workshops can be found in your regional information pack included at the back of this prospectus.

Applying for a place on a workshop

• Choose the workshop.
• Discuss your application with your mentor.
• Submit your application to your local RCN region.

All of these regional events are administered locally and you can access an application form from your local RCN regional office (contact details are included in the regional insert at the back of this prospectus).
The CL&D advanced skills workshop (ASW) programme for reps is developed in collaboration with a range of different stakeholders to address an identified need, skill or knowledge gap. All of these workshops are offered twice, once across the north and once across the south of England and take place in a local RCN regional office.

For 2014/15 the three advanced skills workshops on offer in England are:

- **Is that discrimination?** – the representative role fighting for equality in the workplace
- **Early warning signs** – raising concerns using agreed indicators
- **Influencing strategically** – developing the skills to make an impact.

These are open to all reps and will be advertised on your regional website and in your representative communication/emails.

We expect that these advanced skills workshops will be popular and places are limited. You will need to discuss your application with your mentor and places will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

Application forms are available from your regional office and central L&D administrator. The completed form should be returned to the central administrative person named on the form.

Applying for a place on a workshop

- Choose the workshop.
- Discuss your application with your mentor.
- Submit your application (instructions of where to send your application form can be found on the form).

You are requested to apply for the advanced skills workshop that is closest to your RCN region.
The RCN has developed a comprehensive support programme that is designed to ensure that you feel confident and competent in your role and that will help you provide an effective and high quality service to RCN members.

Both supervision and mentorship aim to support you in practice as a representative. Supervision aims to ensure that you are competent to carry out your role safely whilst mentorship aims to encourage reflective practice to develop your confidence and self reliance.

As a representative you will have been assigned a supervisor/mentor. This person will work with you and provide the support you need for managing member cases and your mentor will help you to identify your learning needs. Together you will work to review your development, plan future activity, clarify goals and implement actions.

You should talk through any CL&D opportunities with your supervisor/mentor before you book a place on a workshop so that you can be sure that it will meet your development needs.
The RCN offers a range of other development opportunities for RCN reps. These include both formal and informal options, details of what’s on offer is detailed below.

**RCN joint representative conferences**

The new twice-yearly joint representative conference is an opportunity for you to hear from national speakers, engage in discussions with colleagues, influence RCN campaigning activity, receive updates on national employment issues and participate in debates. These conferences are now mapped to the practice standards so that you can be assured the event is about your learning as a representative and is an integral part of the RCN’s CL&D.

Evaluations from the first 2014 conference included the following comments from experienced representatives...

“The sessions were informative, detailed and thoroughly explored. Everyone had an opportunity to participate and ask questions.”

“Really enjoyable and great to debate and question staff and colleagues”.

For more information visit www.rcn.org.uk/activist

**RCN Congress**

RCN Congress takes place annually and is an event at which RCN members meet to learn and develop professionally, promote and share nursing practice, and influence nursing and health policies through debate.

As well as debates and presentations in the main auditorium, a large number of events take place at Congress. These are organised by RCN staff and members and cover a range of issues relevant to RCN members and activists.

RCN Congress and AGM 2015 takes place from 21-25 June 2015. The event is free for all RCN members to attend. RCN representatives can apply for travel and accommodation funding through their local boards. To find out more visit www.rcn.org.uk/congress
Membership of RCN governing bodies

RCN representatives who are eligible are invited to stand for election to:

- local branch committees
- national and regional boards
- UK representative committees (stewards, safety and learning representatives)
- RCN Council.

Members of these groups are given the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge around committee and project work, critical analysis and policy development. If you wish to stand for election to any of these groups, please visit www.rcn.org.uk for more details.

Shadowing

You can request to observe the practice of more experienced representatives, specialist representatives, RCN officers or UK representative committee members. This opportunity is available to all RCN representatives and activists across the UK, with the agreement of your mentor and the shadowing partner. Contact and talk through with your mentor.

RCN Online learning and e resources

The RCN has a range of evidence based resources, toolkits, information and guidance that is tailored to the RCN representative role. You can access many of these resources on the RCN website at www.rcn.org.uk/activist

The RCN Learning Zone provides bite-sized chunks of learning that can be completed within 30 minutes. The learning is structured to allow you to dip in and out, as and when you need it. As you work through each area, you are encouraged to add material to your learning portfolio on how you are updating your knowledge and skills.

RCN e-library

The RCN e-library provides RCN members with a range of exciting services, including access to a range of e-books, 700 full text online journals, and databases such as BNI (British Nursing Index) and MIDIRS (Midwives Information and Resource Service), the definitive midwifery database. Visit www.rcn.org.uk/elibrary

RCN events and conferences

RCN events and conferences aim to support your personal and professional development and will help with your clinical skills and knowledge development. There are over 60 RCN conferences and events across the UK every year.

To find out about upcoming RCN events visit www.rcn.org.uk/events
The RCN promotes excellence in practice and shapes health policies

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As you strive to make a difference in your role as a rep, there’ll inevitably be times when you’ll feel tested. But we’ll be with you every step of the way, offering the support and development you need to overcome challenges and make a real and lasting impact in the workplace.

Wear the badge on the outside. Feel the pride on the inside.

www.rcn.org.uk/reps