Knowledge and innovation action plan 2014-2018

The journey begins
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The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) is the voice of nursing across the UK and the largest professional union of nursing staff in the world. It is right that there is public expectation of the RCN as a champion of nursing excellence in knowledge and innovation, and their translation into practice. That is one reason why we developed the Principles of nursing practice – eight principles which describe what the public can expect from nursing practice in any setting, the values of which helped shape this action plan.

Through a backdrop of rapid changes to our health and social care systems, it is increasingly important that nurses, and those who work with them, have the skills and knowledge to deliver care that is person centred, safe and effective, wherever delivered or received.

Nursing has to continually evolve and develop to effectively respond to these changes and new patient needs. We are also still learning how to turn ideas into action and to use research findings to respond to the issues that matter most to patients, such as symptom management, health promotion and prevention, and nursing interventions that enhance wellbeing and quality of life.

In his report of 2013, Improving the safety of patients in England, Don Berwick spoke of the importance of the NHS being a learning organisation. We agree, and we think this extends to all four countries of the UK, and must include both the NHS and the independent sector. Nurse education is an RCN Charter objective. During 2014, we have begun the process of scoping the requirements for the RCN education, learning and development offer to enable us to establish a clear and evidence-based vision for nursing education, and the College’s role in driving up standards, defining the workforce and assessing quality of practice.

Together with the RCN Foundation, we want to enable nurses and health care support workers to develop and share learning, to keep up to date with new developments, and to use their knowledge and skills to transform the care patients receive. It is why we support the role of specialist nurses, and it is why we continue to argue for a fully regulated health care support workforce, with clear learning and development pathways.
The Knowledge and innovation action plan for 2014-2018 sets out the ways in which the RCN will use, build, assure and share knowledge. It will enable us to co-ordinate activities across the RCN and determine which we lead, those we seek to influence and who we intend to work with. It will contribute to the College being seen as a globally respected authority on nursing.

This report celebrates some of the activity that has taken place across the RCN over the past year, and represents the start of a five-year journey towards a fully research-literate nursing workforce and a robust nursing evidence base. We hope to have you with us on that journey.

Ian Norris, Chair of the Nursing Practice and Policy Committee (NPPC)  
Janet Davies, Director of Nursing and Service Delivery
Our Knowledge and innovation action plan for 2014-2018 was launched in March 2014. The vision is to develop nurses and nursing through knowledge and innovation to transform care.

Our plan makes clear the role that knowledge plays in delivering excellence in practice, shaping health policies, influencing nursing development and supporting pre-registration education and lifelong development.

We also recognise the link between positive working environments and improved care, and much of our work centres on the contribution of knowledge in supporting positive employee/employer relationships and effective representation of nurses and nursing locally and nationally.

Our five-year action plan is in itself a journey of discovery, but we keep the following questions at the forefront of our activity.

- Are we making any difference? To our members, their practice, their patients’ experience?
- Are we addressing priority nursing policy questions?
- Are we supporting priority areas of practice?
- Are we clearly stating core professional standards?
- Are our decisions and actions transparent and robust?
- Are people engaging with us and what we say?
# Activity and achievements

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<td>Use knowledge in practice and policy</td>
<td>Build a dynamic knowledge base of sufficient coverage and depth</td>
<td>Assure a knowledge base of breadth and rigour</td>
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**Goal 1:** We promote the use of knowledge to influence policy and to inform decisions and nursing actions. We provide tools and help people develop the skills and confidence to ask questions, make evidence-informed decisions, innovate and adapt in response to changing needs.

**Goal 2:** We contribute to, and maintain a knowledge base for nursing, ensuring that the nursing contribution to national and international multi-professional health research agendas is explicit. This contribution includes identifying and helping to fill gaps in standards, guidance and knowledge resources of relevance to nursing, and continuing to build the authoritative collection on nursing in the UK.

**Goal 3:** Our outputs are evidence informed, impartial and clear about the source, quality and strength of evidence presented. Our cataloguing of the RCN collection assures its intellectual integrity.

**Goal 4:** We connect members to the knowledge they need so they can use it to improve quality of care. Format and content is relevant for people with different levels of expertise, roles, settings and influence. The content and expertise of the RCN library and archive, and the staff supporting its use, inspire the nursing community and the public to gain an insight into the past, present and future of nursing.
Objective 1: Nurses and health care support workers have the knowledge and skills appropriate to their sphere of practice that enable them to seek and use knowledge in decision making and action.

The RCN offers a wide array of learning and development (L&D) opportunities for registered nurses (RNs) and health care support workers (HCSWs) across the UK. We use our influence to make explicit to employers the value of a research-literate workforce. We also promote mentorship and supervision, by and for nurse leaders and emerging nurse leaders, to support them to confidently and effectively lead practice and service improvement.

First steps programme for HCSWs
First steps has been developed around the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework and codes and standards for each of the UK countries. An evaluation programme has been developed, providing a comprehensive assessment of the impact and value of the resource and giving us an evidence base for its continued development and direction.

Health care support workers
Supporting better care is an RCN Scotland accredited training programme which is designed to build on the knowledge, skills and confidence of those who provide direct care to patients/clients in any care setting.

Facts and figures
- Over 6,000 RNs and HCSWs attended RCN-run formal and informal educational events in 2014.
- Professional learning and development facilitators (PLDFs) have been recruited into all nine English regions.
- The PLDF will deliver on national strategic priorities at regional level for the nursing department.
“My manager was really impressed with the portfolio and my developed knowledge...”
Health care support worker

Examples of L&D activities
- The RCN Future Activist Programme enables a consistent standardised L&D programme for our representatives and active branch members throughout the UK.
- RCN West Midlands local learning events. Your branch’s local learning events are a great way to keep your professional development up to date and get support from your local RCN team.

Leadership
- RCN Northern Ireland Senior Nurse Toolkit programme covers a range of subjects, including: role clarity; setting, maintaining and monitoring care standards; becoming a reflective practitioner; managing conflict; and empowering others.
- Scotland was involved in the production, and subsequent implementation, of the Chief Nursing Officer’s education review, *Setting the direction for nursing and midwifery education in Scotland*.
- A political leadership course is run each year in Wales and a political influencing programme is currently being piloted in Northern Ireland.
- The Director of RCN Wales continues to influence the Welsh Government’s Strategy Education Development Group as Welsh NHS Partnership Forum representative.

Case study
The RCN has worked with the Union Learning Fund (ULF) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland for a number of years. The projects promote and protect learning in the workplace and central to this is the role of the learning representative. A union learning representative (ULR) is given statutory time off to promote the value of learning, support learners, arrange learning/training and embed learning in the workplace. An RCN learning representative has the added benefit of being able to access and promote the RCN’s professional learning resources, utilising the RCN’s dual role as a trade union and professional organisation.
Knowledge Use

**Objective 2:** Knowledge is used to underpin professional decision making and nursing actions.

The RCN is engaged with a range of partners that seek the common goal of helping people to use knowledge in practice and policy. In an economic climate that demands more for less, demonstrating the value of nurse-led service innovations is an important skill.

**Building nursing leadership capability in economic assessment: a supported learning opportunity**

The RCN is working with the Office for Public Management (OPM) to grow a cadre of nurse leaders across the UK with the knowledge and skills to conduct pragmatic economic assessments to demonstrate the value of nurse-led service innovations. To date, this programme has been supported by the Burdett Trust for Nursing.

“I found it riveting; your ability to put across the subject in a way that is easy to understand was fantastic. You also gave me the confidence to say ‘yes, with some support, I can have a good go at doing this myself’.”

Programme participant

**Contributing to guidance produced by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)**

The RCN is a consultee/stakeholder for NICE work programmes, and members are encouraged to get involved by reviewing draft consultation documents or by applying to become members of the guideline development groups.

| 8,000+ | members this year have been invited to comment on over 300+ consultations. |
| 42 | nurses were involved in the development of 52 NICE guidance and quality standards that have been published. |

**Case study**

The RCN Foundation is an independent charity supporting nursing to improve the health and wellbeing of the public. It offers a number of bursaries to fund a wide variety of learning, development and research opportunities providing the support individuals need to make a difference to quality patient care.
Knowledge Use

Objective 3: Nurses and HCSWs innovate, using established practices in new ways, building on what looks promising and designing new ways of enhancing and transforming patient care.

Nurses tell us they want access to what works and what is working. Initiatives such as Evidence into Practice (Scotland), the UK Cochrane Centre, and the NICE Quality, Innovation, Productivity and Prevention (QIPP) collection are good ways of promoting good practice, as are the many industry awards which take place each year. We also encourage nurses to publish their work so that others can benefit from their learning and experience.

The RCN works with editors across the spectrum of nursing disciplines to refresh an annual online database of health care journals, all of which are looking to you to publish. Updated each year, the webpage was accessed 17,000 times in 2013.

Facts and figures
- 2014 was the 18th year of the RCN Northern Ireland Nurse of the Year awards. We received a total of 103 entries across 12 categories.
- Now in its third year, the RCN in Wales Nurse of the Year Awards are a key event in the Welsh calendar, and in 2014 146 submissions were received across the 13 categories.

Case study
The RCN have supported the Mary Seacole Awards, aimed at reducing inequalities in Black and Minority Ethnic communities, since their inception in 1994. Calvin Moorley, a recent recipient, undertook a project looking at Stroke aftercare among the black and Asian populations in East London: towards a cultural sensitive framework.

“I’m so proud of the work I’ve done with the MS Trust and the Royal College of Nursing. Using evidence that has been gathered, I’ve been able to develop competency frameworks for MS nurses. That’s one of the best things I’ve ever contributed to.”
Bernadette Porter, MBE, MS Consultant Nurse, National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery
Knowledge Build

Objective 4: Patient care and nursing/social care service decisions are informed by evidence and patient experience.

We want to help grow a dynamic knowledge base for nursing with the coverage, breadth, depth and rigour required for effective decision making and action.

Leading

- RCN Forums, working with the RCN nursing team, produce a wide range of quality guidance, competences and research each year, including:
  - peripheral neurovascular observations for acute limb compartment syndrome
  - defence nursing
  - developing learning disability nursing in the UK
  - decisions relating to cardiopulmonary resuscitation.
- RCN Direct routinely compiles data and evidence from the 100,000+ calls it receives each year, which is used to support decisions made about member services.
- The RCN were hailed for their leadership on the commission of an analysis of the stakeholder consultation to support the development of the DH positive restraint programme.

Collaborating

Collaborating with other organisations is a key theme of the knowledge and innovation plan, and lies at the heart of our work in developing the knowledge base for nursing. Examples of working together include:

- The strategic alliance between the RCN’s Research Institute and the University of Warwick. They research about understanding and improving care through the themes of:
  - patient and public involvement (PPI)
  - experiences of care
  - patient reported outcomes
  - translating knowledge into practice.
- Research Evaluating the Ward Sister Supervisory Role (REWardSS) – in collaboration with RCN Research Institute.
- The RCN is developing a set of principles relating to end-of-life care. This work includes intelligence from a substantial member survey on experience of delivery of end-of-life care which had over 7,500 respondents, as well as evidence reviews supporting practice guidance on delivering nutrition and hydration for the dying.
- Building on our work with the Royal College of Physicians around Ward rounds in medicine: principles for best practice, in 2014, we held a stakeholder event to identify current/future nursing issues of effective communication at ward/team level.
- RCN Wales, working with Cardiff University, have funded a PhD studentship in exploring resilience in contemporary nursing.
“The RCN is now beginning a large-scale programme of work to establish what support nurses need to deliver the care they would like, and to play our part in making that support available.”
Dr Peter Carter, Chief Executive & General Secretary, Royal College of Nursing

Influencing
The RCN draws on the best available evidence and expertise to support change in health and social care policy through evidence reviews produced by our research and innovation analyst team. Examples of our recent work include:

• the *Shape of Caring* review which aims to ensure that throughout their careers nurses and health care assistants receive consistent high-quality education and training which supports patient care. The RCN sought the views of a wide variety of members in its response to the call for evidence
• a scoping review and gap analysis on the research and dialogue addressing seven day care has been done to inform the direction of the RCN’s seven day care working group.

Case study
The Triangle of Care is a model for dementia care that supports a partnership approach between the person with dementia (the patient), the staff member and carer. Funded through the RCN Foundation grants programme, the guide was developed in collaboration with Carers Trust. It has been co-designed with carers, patients and practitioners, with the support of Uniting Carers, Dementia UK.
www.rcn.org.uk/triangleofcare
Objective 5: The research capacity and capability of the nursing research workforce is increased and commensurate with the level at which they are working.

Clinical academics
We need more nurses working at the interface of practice and research, or as clinical academics. The RCN influences in many ways:
- the RCN is a founding member of the Association of UK University Hospitals Clinical Academic Careers (AUKUH CAC) sub-group for nursing, midwifery and allied health professions, a lobbying group, helping to develop its campaign strategy action plan
- the RCN, working with partner organisations, helped to ensure that the Health Education England Research and Innovation Strategy explicitly acknowledges the need for more clinical academics from the nursing and midwifery professions.

Clinical research nursing
Capitalising on the contribution of RNs and HCSWs in clinical research was a two-year project to identify the added value contribution of the RN/HCSW to the National Institute for Health Research and workforce development models to support this professional area. A one-stop-shop website has been created to capture the outcomes of the project.

Facts and figures
In 2013, the RCN conducted the fourth in a series of longitudinal surveys of the nursing professoriate. It provides analytics on the current state of play of senior researchers. Women and the black and minority ethnic community are under-represented, and the absolute and relative numbers lag still too far behind their medical colleagues.

Case study
The RCN was a partner in the Dementia Nursing Research Taskforce, whose purpose was to support the Prime Minister’s challenge on dementia by:
- identifying key nursing research questions to support improvements in patient care in all settings
- establishing writing groups to develop priority research proposals
- developing a plan for building the nurse researcher capacity in dementia.

There are still large gaps in the evidence base of fundamental nursing concerns, such as nutrition, breathlessness, confusion and skin breakdown, as well as non-practice issues like best forms of learning and reflective practice, definition of roles and capabilities. Put simply, we need more nurses doing more high quality research.
Objective 6: The value of evidence-informed practice relevant to nursing is understood by policy makers, health and social care professionals, patients and the public.

It’s important that the voice of nursing is heard by health and social care organisations, so that nursing’s contribution to patient experience and the effectiveness of care are fully represented. At the same time, we continue to develop insight into the link between positive working environments and improved patient safety.

Positive working environments
We will develop co-ordinated and sustained activities across the UK to explore the link between positive working environments and improved care.

• A key feature of the annual RCN employment survey has been the ability to measure changes and trends in answers to the same questions since the 1980s. Question topics include training, workload and staffing.
• The RCN undertook a major consultation exercise with members in response to the Nursing and Midwifery Council’s proposals on the future of revalidation. Nearly 10,000 members responded and their views informed our response.
• The RCN’s Beyond breaking point? survey of members looks at health, wellbeing and stress among nursing staff and highlights the importance of a healthy working environment for high-quality patient care.

Patient safety
• The RCN are involved in the Stop the pressure campaign, which aims to reduce the incidents of pressure ulcers.
• The RCN is a member of the Safe Staffing Alliance pulling together evidence to demonstrate the link between safe staffing levels and quality nursing care. See www.safestaffing.org.uk
• RCN Wales is working closely with the National Assembly for Wales over the Safe Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Bill which is the first of its kind in the UK.
• The RCN Research Society’s 2014 Winifred Raphael Memorial Public Lecture was given by Professor Linda Aiken, leading international nurse researcher on safe staffing levels.

Case study
The RCN has created a project to tackle workplace discrimination across all of the protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010. It aims to raise awareness of, and build the capacity of RCN accredited representatives to identify and appropriately challenge patterns of workplace discrimination. The project was developed in response to feedback from RCN members as well as research that highlighted the often subtle and covert nature of discrimination in the workplace. Research by the Work Foundation and Aston Business School suggests that there is a strong link between the treatment of staff and the patient experience.
Knowledge Build

Objective 7: The RCN collection is recognised as the authoritative nursing collection in the UK.

We will continue to grow the nursing knowledge base by proactively collecting, storing and preserving physical and digital content, including the organisational memory of the RCN.

RCN Library and Archives
The RCN Archives contain some of the most important collections dedicated to the history of the nursing profession in the UK.

The Archives oral collection contains over 700 interviews with nurses, nursing leaders, Department of Health, National Health Service and RCN members and staff from across the UK and some from overseas. All of the individuals have a vital connection to nursing and relate information about themselves and their careers and experiences in nursing. Most include comments about nursing as a profession – politically or historically – and some refer to important developments, changes or events.

Topics covered include military and wartime nursing, district nursing, immigration, the growth of nursing research and professional leadership.

Seminal nursing research
Available now in our library:

• RCN Study of Nursing Care Series. These 12 monographs were written between 1972 and 1975, and represent some of the most widely read studies in the nursing canon:
  - Stockwell, Felicity (1972) The unpopular patient
• RCN Research Series. These reports were written between 1973 and 1994
  - Pembrey, SE (1980) The ward sister - key to nursing: a study of the organisation of individualised nursing
• the RCN Steinberg Collection is a unique reference collection of UK doctoral theses in print, and increasingly electronic, format from the 1950s to the present day, plus masters dissertations to 2000, completed by nurses and others on topics of relevant to nursing. There are 1,709 theses in total.

“Thanks for the replies, and particularly to the RCN for the detailed response. Looking into this led me to the fabulous RCN top 50 research articles from the last 50 years - check out: http://ow.ly/FEGTB. The one I wanted was the second on the list!”
Clinical Librarian, Archway Healthcare
Objective 8: Professional standards and other knowledge resources produced or endorsed by the RCN meet RCN quality standards.

Objective 9: RNs, HCSWs and others have confidence in using RCN knowledge resources – they understand the different types of knowledge that exist and know how to use them.

Objective 10: Maintained networks of members with specific expertise are available to undertake peer review and help us quality assure knowledge resources.

We will be clear about the sources of knowledge and the quality and strength of evidence presented in all our resources (published or endorsed).

Case study
The purpose of the Professional Records Standards Body (PRSB) is to ensure that the requirements of those who provide and receive care can be fully expressed in health and social care records. It provides an authoritative voice to facilitate widespread adoption of approved record standards. The RCN is a founder member.

Facts and figures
In 2014, we quality assured and endorsed 26 resources.

RCN Quality Assurance Framework and lifecycle
The RCN Quality Assurance Framework has been designed to ensure a robust approach to the production of RCN guidance and publications. There are nine quality standards, which include:
- resources are evidence based
- resources have been considered for four-country involvement and development
- all resources are reviewed in relation to their lifecycle.
Knowledge Assure

**Objective 11:** RCN research activity is of an optimum standard and has maximum impact.

**Objective 12:** The RCN collection is a reliable and trustworthy source of nursing knowledge, past and present.

**Staff development**
We have a range of staff development opportunities to ensure that RCN staff have the skills to offer advice and produce evidence-based guidance. For example, we are developing a programme of learning on:
- core research skills
- a quarterly research seminar programme – “The Big Question” on important contemporary nursing issues, frequently delivered by external research speakers
- regular journal club meetings for staff to develop critical appraisal skills by engaging with nursing research articles
- workshops on developing and quality assuring good survey design.

**Corporate memory**
The world wide web includes a huge and seemingly endless amount of information, so it is important that our members can easily identify what is current practice, and what we keep for historical purposes.

We will develop our use of the library and archive catalogues to clearly reflect current clinical status of publications and our corporate memory.

We will use appropriate international cataloguing standards to ensure the provenance and content of our holdings are easily accessible to all.

**Case study**
The RCN was proud to support an international project, led by the Florence Nightingale Museum to digitise and make available holdings of Florence Nightingale Letters. We joined the Wellcome Library and the Boston University Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center in digitising Florence’s letters and providing search facilities to enable people to freely access Florence in her own words in a single place. More collaborative partners are joining the project, and we hope that practicing nurses as well as historians will be inspired by this resource.

[www.bu.edu/florence/nightingale](http://www.bu.edu/florence/nightingale)
Knowledge Share

**Objective 13:** RCN produced and/or endorsed knowledge resources are designed to suit different users.

**Policy briefings**
RCN policy leads and professional advisers across all four countries of the UK work with a wide range of stakeholders, including government and think tanks, on the development and implementation of policy to ensure nursing influence and voice. This includes work in relation to what the future nursing workforce may look like, incorporating education, regulation and skill mix. Over 40 policy briefings and factsheets are produced each year by the four policy departments, including:
- RCN factsheet: Clinical senates and strategic clinical networks
- RCN factsheet: Continuing professional development (CPD) for nurses working in the United Kingdom (UK)
- delivering the 2020 vision in NHS Scotland
- RCN Wales Time to Care
- RCN evidence to the Northern Ireland Assembly Health Committee: emergency care departments.

**RCN Direct online advice**
RCN Direct provides information and advice on a whole range of employment and nursing topics. These resources have been developed to meet different learning needs and include videos, factsheets and toolkits [www.rcn.org.uk/support/rcn_direct_online_advice](http://www.rcn.org.uk/support/rcn_direct_online_advice). They have 270 pages of online advice covering 45 professional nursing topics, and receive over 12,000 queries per year on nursing practice issues.

**Case study**
The Criminal Justice Services (CJS) *Principles of nursing practice* contains guidance on specific practice issues faced by all grades of nurses from newly qualified to expert practitioner, many with specific specialist skills, working across all four UK countries in the criminal justice service. [www.rcn.org.uk/nursing_in_cjs_principles_of_nursing_practice](http://www.rcn.org.uk/nursing_in_cjs_principles_of_nursing_practice)

Time is often our enemy, so it’s important that we present and package evidence in usable formats, reflecting the different requirements of particular and diverse audiences.
Knowledge Share

Objective 14: Knowledge is accessible and shared by all.

We seek to advance the knowledge base for nursing by promoting and facilitating collaboration and networking amongst all our stakeholders, via large events such as RCN Congress and national conferences, newsletters or social media. Many people now talk about the problems of information overload, and we are working with our members to continuously update our understanding of the ways in which they prefer to access, receive and share knowledge.

e-Resources
Like many organisations, the RCN recognises the advantages of producing timely, up-to-date information through electronic means.

- The RCN produces two professional e-bulletins, relating to Quality and Safety, and Research and Innovation. Accessible via email, mobile and tablet devices, they are free, and available to anyone.
- The Employment Relations Department produces a monthly bulletin updating RCN colleagues on developments in the NHS, the independent and private sectors and the wider world of work.
- In addition, the RCN produces regular newsletters and blogs containing news local to where you live and work. Your regional office or country Board will have more information.
- Social media continues to radically re-shape the information world we live in, and the RCN utilises Facebook, Twitter, blogs and YouTube.
Facts and figures

**32million**

The Congress 2014 hashtag #RCNCongress made 32million impressions on Twitter during the 4-day conference in 2014.

**80,000**

We have more than 80,000 followers across our social media channels.

**600,000**

Our most successful Facebook post so far in 2014 reached more than 600,000 people.

Networking

Conferences represent a great medium to bring people together to promote and advance knowledge of relevance to nursing, share and collaborate, and participate in critical debate. The RCN runs more than 60 such events a year across the UK on the key issues affecting you in your workplace, including:

- **RCN Congress** – an annual event for RCN members to meet, learn, develop professionally and share excellent nursing practice. Around 4,000 delegates attend each year, and it is an opportunity for members inform the RCN agenda and influence nursing and health policies through debate. This year, the student programme included two events around “evidence into practice”.

Case study

The RCN international nursing research conference is an annual event, and in 2014 attracted over 400 delegates from more than 25 countries. It invites the submission of contemporary abstracts in research which make a new contribution to the body of nursing knowledge. The conference website acts as a repository of the presentations given, with more than 200 uploaded in 2014.

Consultation

As part of our mission to represent nurses and nursing, promote excellence in practice and shape health policies, the RCN responds to a variety of consultations from other organisations. The RCN also carries out consultations and produces briefings on a wide range of nursing issues that often relate to the consultations we respond to. Members’ views play an important role in helping to inform our response to consultations, so we encourage you to tell us what you think.

Case study

Accessing nursing knowledge through the RCN Library and Heritage Centre: www.youtube.com/watch?v=CdUE5WvrHhA
Objective 15: Virtual and in-person visitors to the library and archives gain insight into nursing.

With online access to quality information resources around the clock and four libraries, our library and archive services are on hand to assist you in finding information to support best practice in the workplace and aid your studies.

Audience engagement
We use new and creative ways of sharing nursing knowledge through physical and virtual exhibitions, seminars, displays and events, including:

- tours to more than 1,300 visitors this year, including college, university and local history groups
- working with the RCN History of Nursing Society and Defence Nurses Forum on exhibitions and events exploring frontline nursing in the First World War and today
- partnering with RCN nurse advisers on a lunchtime lecture series introducing public audiences to contemporary nursing issues
- involvement in high profile library and heritage sector activities, including welcoming 550 visitors during Open House Weekend.

Library and archive services
With our team of expert information professionals we are here to support you in a number of ways including:

- guides available on our website and training sessions in our libraries to provide you with the skills needed to search for and evaluate quality evidence
- free literature searches for full members of the RCN - with over 600 completed this year
- answering over 20,000 email, telephone, web chat and in person enquiries that can range from requesting the loan of a book by post, helping to trace a reference through to genealogical enquiries
- the RCN Archives (based in Edinburgh) is home to a wide range of nursing related objects including badges, pamphlets, nursing equipment, uniforms, books, journals and photographs.

Case study
On World Mental Health Day 2014, over 100 people attended our public lecture to hear authors Nathan Filer and Professor Barbara Taylor explore mental health nursing from two very different perspectives. Half of the audience were not from a health care background, but found the talks insightful and thought provoking.

‘As a non-nurse I found the event very accessible as well as fascinating.’
Public Lecture attendee
We hope that reading this review of activity for 2014 has given you an insight into the breadth and depth of professional and union activity undertaken across the College.

We recognise that progress towards the goals of a fully research-literate nursing staff and a robust nursing base for all practice settings is likely to be a long and complex journey that we cannot achieve on our own.

We will continue to look for innovative ways to engage with you, our members, and encourage you to become involved in the activity of your College.

To find out more about the RCN’s Knowledge and innovation action plan for 2014-2018 visit www.rcn.org.uk/knowledge or email knowledge@rcn.org.uk