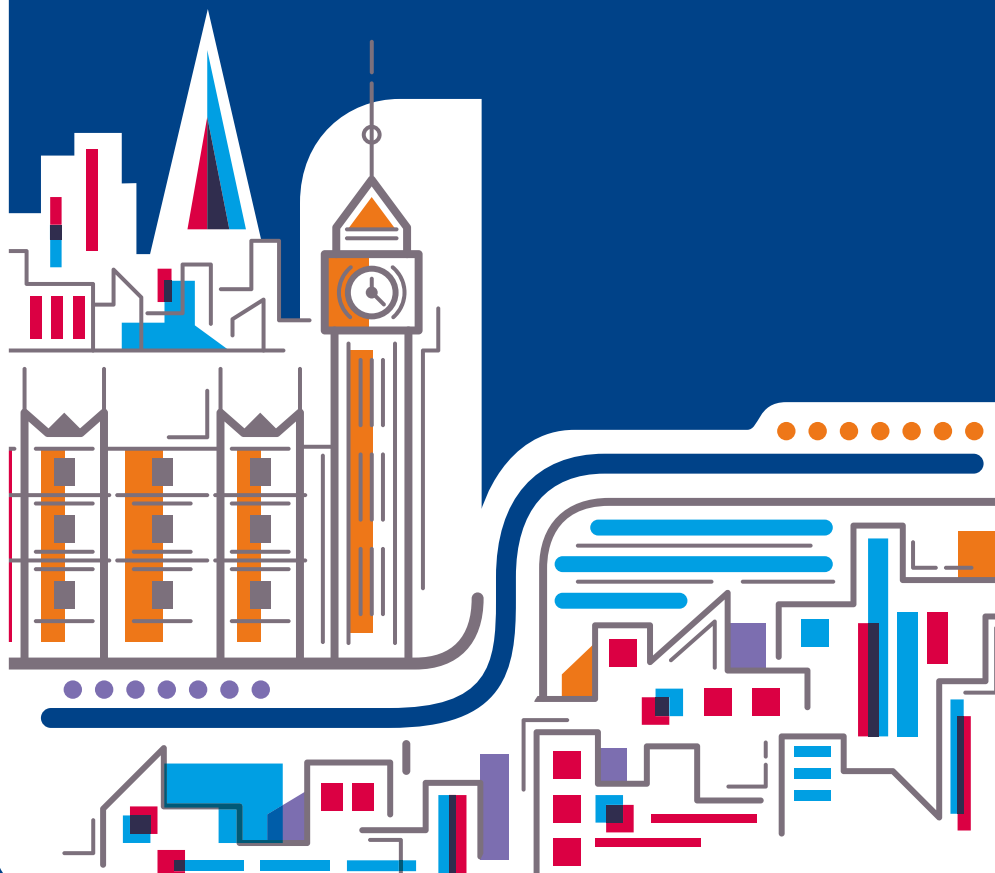




Royal College  
of Nursing

# Nursing Counts:

Influencing your Prospective  
Parliamentary Candidates



# How can I play a part in the RCN's General Election campaign?

It is down to the campaigning efforts of our members that we are able to keep nursing high on the political agenda.

On Thursday 12 December, the UK will go to the polls in a General Election and elect the next UK Government.

We have launched our **#NursingCounts** Manifesto which calls for nursing to be the top priority for the next UK Government. We are calling for the UK Government to:

- 1 Address nursing workforce shortages**
- 2 Invest in health and care services**
- 3 Invest in nursing education and professional development**
- 4 Build an immigration system that enables nursing**
- 5 Improve working conditions and pay**

Across the UK, there are 650 constituencies and in the build up to the UK General Election, prospective parliamentary candidates (PPCs) from all parties will be visiting your home campaigning for your vote so that they can win a seat in Parliament. This means we have 650 opportunities to make sure that the next cohort of MPs are committed to nursing.

The RCN does not support one political party over another. We work with all political parties to champion the cause of nursing and enact positive change. All candidates must be given a fair and equal chance to engage and support the RCN so that we are complying with the Lobbying Act 2014.

Remember to share your personal experiences as nursing staff so that PPCs know how the decisions that UK Government and Parliament make affect you. Not all PPCs will know a nurse, or understand the varied expertise, skills and knowledge you have.

# Ask your PPC to become a Nursing Champion

We are building a body of support in parliament of elected representatives who will support nursing and RCN campaigns. We want every candidate running for election pledges to be a Nursing Champion.

We're calling for all Nursing Champions, if elected as an MP, to promise to advocate and speak up for nursing staff and patient care in the House of Commons. This way, whatever the political makeup of the next UK Government, the nursing voice will be at its heart.

## Sign up to be a Nursing Champion

Ask your PPC to sign up so that if they are elected they have pledged to be an advocate for your local nursing community and to represent your views in Parliament. The form is on our website:

[rcn.org.uk/nursingcounts](https://rcn.org.uk/nursingcounts)

## Share their support for nursing on social media

Ask your PPC to share their pledge to be a Nursing Champion with their followers via social media and on their campaign website. This will help to promote our **#NursingCounts** campaign and encourage other candidates to support us.



# Questions to ask PPCs

Be prepared to engaged with your PPC, challenge them, and raise your concerns. Here are five questions about our priorities which you can ask:

## **1 What is your experience of nursing? Do you know about our profession and our skills?**

Some PPCs may have a personal connection to nursing, but others will not be aware of the expertise you have.

## **2 How will you and your party resolve the workforce shortages that are currently putting a strain on staff and which are impacting patient care?**

Nursing shortages across the UK are compromising patient care, yet it is well established that the right number of staff, with the right skills, at the right time and in the right place is essential for safe and effective care. We need law which enables staffing for safe and effective care in every country of the UK.

## **3 How will you and your party support local health and care services to meet the needs of our local area?**

What data or research will they use to make sure that the health and care services are meeting the health needs that people have? The next UK Government must understand local health needs and then fund, staff and plan health services accordingly.

## **4 Will you and your party ensure that Brexit does not impact patient care, for example drug delays at the border?**

Any version of Brexit must not: dilute fair employment practices; water down health and safety standards and workers' rights; impact public health, or prevent the global sharing of knowledge and skills.

## **5 Will you and your party commit to giving nursing the investment and funding we need? How will you secure this?**

This investment must include funding for professional development, education and pay, terms and conditions.

# Other ways to get involved in our #NursingCounts General Election campaign

## Arranging a meeting with your PPCs

Meeting your PPCs is a great way to hear their views on health and care services and to ask questions about your concerns for nursing and patient care. This can be a good way to encourage them to commit to supporting nursing, and to understand their views.

## Attending a hustings and why they're important

A hustings is an open meeting between all candidates running to be elected in one particular constituency. You can attend and raise your concerns about nursing, and ask the PPCs for their view on the issues that we're campaigning on.

## Encourage friends and family to ask their PPC to support nursing

We need lots of people advocating for nursing and patients in the UK General Election campaign so that candidates are encouraged to support the RCN's agenda.

If you'd like help arranging a meeting with your candidates, or need support to attend your local hustings, please contact your regional office who can help you.



## Stay up to date with our campaign

Communications managers in RCN regional and country offices can help you set up and prepare for meeting PPCs. Get in touch and let them know in advance so they can make sure you have everything you need.

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**More information:** You can also visit our **#NursingCounts** General Election page or the RCN campaigns webpage, which includes more information about all of our work and policy priorities for the next UK Government.

[rcn.org.uk/nursingcounts](https://rcn.org.uk/nursingcounts)

