

## RCN Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct provides guidance on the expected behaviour of members of the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) and sets out the standards of conduct that support our values in the work that we do. It will be applied reasonably and proportionally and applies to all members of the RCN.

- 1.1 The RCN is committed to promoting a culture that is inclusive of all members.
- 1.2 Members must conduct themselves so as to maintain the individual and collective reputation of the RCN and its members.
- 1.3. The RCN welcomes open debate and free exchange of ideas: where every member feels able to contribute, assured that their points of view will be valued and differences of opinion will be respected.
- 1.4 The code ensures that there is parity between staff and members, with each being held to an equitable standard of conduct.
- 1.5 Members are expected to maintain a high standard of personal conduct and to treat staff and other members with respect.
- 1.6 It is the responsibility of all RCN members to promote positive behaviours, challenge poor behaviours and report any concerns.
- 1.7 The RCN will support members and staff who challenge poor conduct and behaviours.
- 1.8 Every RCN member, including those elected into a representative or governance role is bound by this code of conduct when acting on behalf of the RCN.
- 1.9 All members must comply with relevant RCN policies
- 1.10 In the event of this Code of Conduct being breached, incidents will be handled in accordance with The RCN Member Resolution Policy

**Principles of behaviour for members holding an elected or appointed role, in addition to those above are:**

### **2. Be Respectful to others**

- 2.1 Everyone has the right to contribute and should be encouraged to do so, every contribution is valued.

- 2.2 Everyone should ensure that work is typically undertaken in a constructive manner and there is a clear commitment on the part of the RCN to ensuring, that everyone is at all times treated with dignity, courtesy and respect.
- 2.3 Encourage others to express opinions and ideas.
- 2.4 Encouraging inclusive team working in which everyone's unique contribution is valued and recognised; where every individual is able to contribute effectively to realise their full potential with dignity and respect.
- 2.5 Listen to one another respectfully and be open to others' ideas and opinions.
- 2.6 See things from the point of view of others and be prepared to change your mind, consider the time, place and impact on others.
- 2.7 Consider other member's ideas to change or improve work.
- 2.8 Debate openly and challenge constructively, but support decisions made democratically and collectively.
- 2.9 Promote a culture where individuals feel confident and comfortable in raising any concerns regarding offensive or unacceptable behaviours that they have directly experienced or witnessed.

### **3. Be Representative**

- 3.1 Where possible and appropriate seek the views of your constituents on the issues that affect them, sharing relevant information and feedback any outcomes, which are not confidential to your constituents.
- 3.2 Represent constituents' views at meetings and when voting.
- 3.3 Act in the best interests of members.
- 3.4 Recognise positive behaviours, but challenge disrespectful and inappropriate behaviours.
- 3.5 Be welcoming.

### **4. Be Accountable**

- 4.1 Members must act within the standing orders and regulations of the Royal College of Nursing Royal Charter and promote the success of the College for the benefit of its members in exercising reasonable care, skill and diligence in all their duties.
- 4.2 Members should also be aware of any potential conflict of interest and identify the risk that their ability to apply judgement could be influenced by a secondary interest. Members are required to complete and regularly update the register of interests. Where a potential conflict of interest exists, members must declare this before a debate or a decision is made. This may limit their participation in debate and/or decision-making.

- 4.3 Confidentiality must be maintained. Information about, or held by the RCN, that is not expressly put into the public domain by the College may only be given to others if they are entitled to receive it and must not be used except for the benefit of the College.
- 4.4 Those Members holding governance roles must comply with '*The Fit and Proper Person Test 2018*'.

**This code of conduct should be read in conjunction with the following:**

*The RCN Respect Charter 2017*

*The NMC Code Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates* <https://www.nmc.org.uk/globalassets/sitedocuments/nmc-publications/nmc-code.pdf>

*The RCN Fit and Proper Person Test 2018*

*The RCN Customer Complaints Policy 2018.*

*Relevant RCN Policies including The Expenses Policy 2018*

Approved by RCN Council 27 November 2019