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in practice and shapes health policies*

ROYAL COLLEGE OF NURSING OF THE UNITED KINGDOM
LONDON BOARD
MINUTES
OPEN SESSION

Date: 12th February December 2020

Time: 14.00 – 17.00

Venue: RCN London Office, 5th Floor, 20 Cavendish Square, London W1G 0RN

Notes of the meeting of the London Board held on 12th December 2020 at RCN London Regional Office, 5th Floor, 20 Cavendish Square, London W1G 0RN held under the terms of the RCN Confidentiality Policy.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Cynthia Davis	(Chair)
Jim Blair	(Vice Chair) North Central London Inner
Michael Coram	North East Inner London
Noeleen Behan	North Central Outer
Joan Myers	Council Member
Karen Sanders	Trade Union Committee
Joyce Inoniyegha	North West London Inner
Shamilah Nabyangwa	South East London Inner
Diane Cameron	South East London
Audrey Sothcott	North West London

Observers:

Mike Smith	UK Stewards Committee
Sagila Thiruthanikasalan	UK Health Practitioner Committee
Ian Norris	UK Safety Reps Committee

RCN STAFF PRESENT

Sue Tarr	Operational Manager (Board Secretary)
Mark Farmer	Operational Manager
Pamela Nelson	Regional Service Manager
Samuel Mason	Regional Administration Coordinator
John Considine	Communications Manager

OPEN SESSION – WELCOME OBSERVERS

20.08 REPORT FROM CONFIDENTIAL SESSION – VERBAL - Board Chair

There were no observers present so no report was required.

It was suggested that some of the consultation discussions may have been able to be in the open session.

Open session minutes from previous meeting – The notes of the open session of the previous meeting were reviewed.

Page 9 – Sagila reported from HP committee - amend to: “The name change was not universally welcomed”.

It was agreed to list apologies more clearly on the notes.

20.09 COUNCIL REPORT – Joan Myers

Joan reiterated the information included in the council report papers.

Joan reported on the meeting on 17th January which discussed industrial action in Northern Ireland.

It was reported that pay in Northern Ireland had fallen by up to 15%.

It was reported that the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland had been met with. A deal to replicate the one in England had been agreed.

Council also met on 24th January to discuss the pay dispute in Guernsey and to discuss the next steps. It was noted that Guernsey is not subject to UK pay legislation. It was agreed to ballot members regarding whether they wanted to undertake strike action.

Sue Tarr noted that the RCN members in Northern Ireland should be applauded for their industrial action and the success they achieved. It was noted that the public support was high and member engagement was significant.

It was suggested that the politics of nursing and law exams could be included in the nursing curriculum in the future. It was suggested that having awareness in these areas would be beneficial to nurses in the future.

Ian noted that there was a session at the joint reps conference to discuss experiences and what went well from the recent industrial action.

20.10 STAFFING FOR SAFE AND EFFECTIVE CARE

John Considine / Mark Farmer

- SSEC Decision making paper

Mark updated on the paper and reiterated what was expected of the board. It was agreed that if the board were happy, then Mark would feed back that it supported option 2.

Action – Mark to feed back to the scrutiny committee that the London Board support option 2 of the SSEC paper.

Mark updated on an e-mail from Mark Boothroyd which asks the board to consider various proposals facing nursing and legislation which were:

1. To organise a protest action at the NHS England Board meeting, held at NHS England HQ at Elephant and Castle, on March 26th. Members of the public can register to attend the board meeting, and we hope to get 10-15 RCN members to attend and use the opportunity to speak out about the situation facing nursing and why we want safe staffing legislation.
2. Hold an all-London RCN rally in Parliament square in May, around the themes of "Keep your promises" about the governments general elections promises about the NHS and providing 50,000 nurses. The rally can be used to highlight the lack of workforce planning, and the need for safe staffing legislation. A poster should be produced ASAP and distributed to all branches so they can begin advertising the rally.
3. As preparation for the all-London rally, RCN London to encourage all branches to organise leafleting and actions at their hospitals and workplaces to spread information about the campaign and spread the rally date. These campaign days can make use of the new campaign bus, and could be supported by activists from across London, so that branches with less active members don't feel overwhelmed or unable to take action.
4. RCN London should explore having a member of the team keeping constant track of ministerial diaries and especially visits to hospitals, and whenever a government minister visits a hospitals, the RCN should call a protest at the hospital and try and mobilise members to attend and challenge them about safe staffing. The purpose would be to harry government ministers wherever they went so they are constantly questioned and pressured about what they are doing about nursing. The protests would also show members the RCN is being active and encourage people to join the campaign.
5. Many members feel their branches don't have enough resources to provide materials needed for stunts and protests and wanted the RCN to use some of its budget to support them. There was a lot of support for having scrubs made with the RCN logo which members could wear on demonstrations to show they are working nurses. The board should discuss that proposal and see what extra support can be provided to branches to help them organise the campaign.

It was agreed to go back to Mark Boothroyd to ask him why it was specifically May that he had proposed for this although it was noted that there was initial support for the proposals. It was suggested that May might be too soon to organise this. Mark also suggested that location would be important to maximise any potential effect. It was suggested that Parliament Square was a very large space for this and might be too big.

It was suggested that checks should be made regarding any other protests that may be taking place to find out whether the RCN could take part in these.

Action – Cynthia to respond to Mark Boothroyd e-mail conveying London Board thoughts on this proposal.

20.11 EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS LEAD UPDATE

Sue Tarr spoke about her tabled report. It was noted that no CRM updates had been agreed yet regarding the change to the process for case management. It was reported that London Region continued to have the largest number of regional enquiries from RCN Direct. It was noted that member cases were opened within 4 / 5 days on average and this seemed to be meeting the member needs.

It was noted that the Joint Reps Development Day in November was a successful day. The next one was noted as being on 19th February and a large number of reps had signed up.

It was noted that the recruitment target figures for the London Region were 15-20% and had been met.

Total membership was over 60,000 members, making London the Largest Region by membership number. It was noted that the nursing recruitment target for 2020 was 0 members, meaning to maintain the current number. This was also the case for student recruitment, and it was reported that it was expected that student recruitment numbers would decrease based on current trends.

It was suggested that Regional Officers give sufficient notice where they intend to do ward walks so that Branch Chairs or Board members and reps can have the opportunity to be present.

It was reported that the president had said she would inform her secretary when she intends to make a visit to trusts so that Regional Directors can be informed.

Sue reported on some positive member comments that had been received through feedback and noted the work of the officers.

It was suggested that there was great importance on managing member expectations at the start of the case so the member is aware of what the officer and region can and can't do for them.

Sue reported that there was a section of RCND who dealt with lapsed members, those who had not paid subscriptions for three months. It was noted that the total London membership figure did not include lapsed members so all were fully paid members.

Action – Sue Tarr to speak to Governance regarding lapsed membership details.

20.12 PROFESSIONAL NURSING LEAD UPDATE

Mark Farmer updated to note that the WRES and WDES reports had still not been received. Mark would be in a better position next meeting to advise the board on actions needed.

20.13 CONGRESS

- Congress update PN / ST

Pam noted that previous discussion had covered much of the relevant congress update surrounding attendance selection.

206 people applied to London Region to attend congress of which a large number (161) had not been to congress previously.

Pam updated on the importance of allocating members to voting places and encouraged those in Branch Executive positions to make sure this happens in as quickly as possible.

It was reported that some branches had had difficulty getting members engaged enough to sign up for voting places and to make sure they registered themselves on the relevant sections of the website.

It was confirmed that unused voting places could not be transferred to other branches. However it would be possible for London Region to link those who have applied for First Time funding to any branch with vacant voting places.

Sue reported that there would be the usual London Welcome Event at Congress which all London members are invited to attend. Sue welcomed volunteers to assist her with the planning of London activities. Noeleen, Joyce, Karen and Cynthia offered to assist with this.

COMFORT BREAK and OPEN SPACE

A short break in proceedings for those in attendance to stretch their legs and an opportunity for observers to interact with Board members

20.14 COMMUNICATIONS - John Considine

John reported to the Board regarding the cost of living report. It was noted that there had been positive stakeholder feedback following the report including Crisis and the New Economics Foundation and MacMillan as well as the BMA.

It was reported that the Green party had been supportive of the report as had the Liberal Democrat party.

John noted the RCN twitter page and urged members to follow this.

It was noted that the report highlighted the average nursing salary as a proportion to rent in London which produced interesting results. It was reported that London MP support had been poor. John noted the importance of continuing links with MP's to maintain positive relationships as there would be a lot to achieve in a short space of time. John encouraged the board to speak to their local MPs if possible.

It was reported that media pickup had been good. An article had been put in the Evening Standard as well as local papers including the London Post, the Kensington & Chelsea and the News Cable.

20.15 REGIONAL DIRECTORS REPORT – VERBAL – Sue Tarr / Mark Farmer

- Board Member Attendance
- Sub-group Attendance

Sue Tarr updated on the board attendance figures and noted that Mary Wells has stepped down as has Samuel Newman. Once his formal resignation is received Sue will seek advice from Governance on how to fill this position.

20.16 AGREE KEY MESSAGES

- Discussed and agreed their response to the Council consultation on when to hold the AGM. The feedback included the view that the AGM should remain as part of Congress but the timing was important. This RCN consultation is open for Branches and members to submit their own views via the RCN website until 31 March 2020.
- Discussed and agreed their response to the Council consultation on Pay. The feedback included reference to London Living Wage, Independent Pay Review Body, Agenda for Change principles and what would be expected in terms of open and transparent communications.
- Discussed and agreed their response to the Council consultation on review of membership categories. The feedback included the agreement with the key principles as stated but were not in agreement that there should be a 'sliding scale' approach to membership subscriptions. This RCN consultation is open for Branches and members to submit their own views via the RCN website until 1 April 2020.
- Discussed and agreed the changes to the borders that link with South East and Eastern region to clarify member branch and representation region. This will mean that some of the workplaces that have historically be placed outside London but are serviced by London Region will be allocated to the correct region and branch. The internal branch changes between South West Inner and Outer Branches are unchanged at the moment.
- Discussed the activity for the Staffing for Safe and Effective Care activity in London including activity taken by London members at tube stations and shopping centres. They also discussed some proposals for a range of other activities which had been submitted for the board to consider.

- Discussed the arrangements for London members to support Congress. The board agreed an additional fund for each branch to support non-voting members to attend Congress.
- A report was received from Dr Joan Myers London Council member following her attendance at her first Council meeting. Joan focused on the first strike action taken by nurses in 103 years and the appreciation from London Board was expressed for their bravery and professionalism in standing up for their Patients and members who were working in a difficult position due to shortage of staff.

20.17 ANY OTHER BUSINESS and DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

Ian Norris raised a concern about nurses having to complete CPD in their own time. It was agreed that this was neither fair nor acceptable, against Agenda for Change and would be something the Professional Nursing Committee should review. Michael highlighted that Capital Nurse had started some work and Mark updated on protected learning times.

It was agreed to maintain a 9.30am start time and members were reminded of the need to arrive promptly.

The board once again noted their thanks to Sue Tarr for her support and work for the London Region.

The next London Board meeting will be on 20th May 2020.

CLOSE

