

RCN Scotland Board

Minutes of the Royal College of Nursing Scotland Board, Open Session, held by video and teleconference on Thursday 14 May 2020 from 09.30am-1.00pm

Present:

North Sector

Alistair Grant	Grampian
Peter Cartwright	Highland
Andy Notman	Islands
+Martin MacGregor	Tayside

East Sector

Yvonne Smith	Borders
Sharon Adamson	Fife

West Sector

Aurelia (Peggy) Kungu	Dumfries & Galloway
Ann MacCrimmon	Greater Glasgow
Tom Wilson	Lanarkshire

Chair

Other Seats

Geoff Earl	Council
Mandy Kay	Temporary Seat
Theresa Connor	Professional Nursing Committee

In attendance:

Theresa Fyffe	Director
Eileen McKenna	Associate Director
Norman Provan	Associate Director
Luci Pollard	Board Administrator
Carol Harris	Communications Advisor
Sian Kiely	Knowledge and Research Manager

Apologies:

Jasmin Clark	Lothian	
Julie Lamberth	Ayrshire & Arran	Vice-Chair
Graham Revie	Trade Union Committee	

Observers:

Anne-Marie Rafferty, President, RCN

Also attended:

Elsbeth Caithness, RCN UK Safety Committee Representative

*arrived after the start of the meeting

+left prior to the end of the meeting

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed the Board to the Open session of the meeting.

2. Minutes from the open session of the meeting held on 20 February 2020

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Actions were noted.

Discussion

Item 9 – discussion regarding lessons to be learnt from NI and Jersey regarding industrial action – there was to be a presentation at the joint reps conference, but the conference had been cancelled. The Board would like to consider this for a Board development session at a future meeting.

Item 13, page 5 – governance has been asked about what has been happening across other countries and regions. Some response had been received but further will be sought.

3. Board Election Constraints

The Chair reminded the Board that the format had been agreed previously and would be used for two cycles of elections.

Discussion

Some issues to be considered for future elections: under representation of some sectors: HCSWs representation. Some Board members considered that there was a good spread and representation from a variety of work-places.

A list of those who are not able to stand for election again will be circulated to the Board.

There were concerns that there should be good competition for the seat. It was noted that the Board should be fully inclusive for all members and noted the risks of vacant seats. The Board agreed it was important to look at the systems and processes which are developed to encourage a broad range of members to consider nomination to the Board.

It was noted that there 3 seats to elect in the East Sector, which included the current Forth Valley vacancy. It was noted that the West sector has two seats to elect to 2024.

The Board unanimously agreed the constraints.

4. Covid-19 Response

Communications - Board were asked to share the 'Share your Stories' link with members. It noted there was a word limit. NI are trialling a different approach to capturing member stories and this is being monitored and will be considered for future use. RCN Scotland members are being featured in the

Bulletin and there is regular content on the RCN website from Scotland members and staff.

Students – The Board noted emergency standards for undergraduate education. There have been significant changes for students which have caused individuals some concerns. The RCN insisted that there should be choice and students should not be forced into one direction or another. There is on-going work to support students who have opted in to paid placements and those who have chosen not to opt in. Throughout this has included close working with the RCN UK Student Committee Members for Scotland
Reps Learning & Development – RCN events had been cancelled until May, at the time of the paper, which has had an impact on courses that could be delivered. It will be some time before face to face learning will be possible. Work is starting (along with UK colleagues) to look at how learning can be delivered using digital platforms whilst on-going government restrictions are in place.

HCSWs – This workstream has recently commenced to look at the needs of these members as a result of the pandemic. A small group of staff, along with members, are progressing the work. There has been good liaison with the Council HSCW member and phone contact with a variety of members across Scotland. Members across different sectors have been approached to write blogs. It was noted that it is difficult to get responses from HCSWs in the independent sector. Bite-sized virtual learning is being developed based on feedback received so far regarding their requirements for support.

PPE – there has been a significant amount of work on this issue. Members from across Scotland have raised a number of issues.

Theresa Connor left the meeting

Care Homes – the amount of Covid-19 prevalent in the care home sector is significant. The Board noted that the RCN had, very early in the pandemic, had raised the issue of shortage of testing and PPE. A Clinical Professional Advisory Group has recently been set up and Eileen McKenna represents the RCN on this Group. The Director has a seat on the Care Home Rapid Action Group which was set up by the Scottish Government following significant pressure from the RCN. Wrap-around support was a focus of interest.

Discussion

It was recognised that the UK communications strategy was going well, and the NI are piloting a tool which will be reviewed and if then rolled out if appropriate.

Communications – The Board agreed the approached set out in the appendix.

Students – The Board noted the update and agreed the direction of travel.

Learning Reps – The Board noted the report. The long-term impact of the current gap in training was a concern. It was hoped that Teams software was being rolled across the NHS and this may help facilitate learning in the future. It was agreed that it was important to find new ways of working to facilitate rep training.

HCSW – The Board agreed that greater engagement was welcomed.

Care Homes – The Board noted the update.

PPE – A follow-up survey has been developed, although it was noted that the response had been lower than previously. The Board noted the work done to date and agreed the direction of travel. The Vice-Chair although absent from the Board meeting, had noted with the Chair and Director the quality of the plastic gowns which are sometimes being worn twice. The Vice-Chair had reported this through the correct channels. Multiple guidance was also making it difficult for members. New guidance was being issued regarding the plastic gowns. NHS Lothian has put out guidelines that the eye protection that has been used is not fit for purpose. This is also the case with NHS Borders. It was noted that single use visors were being used and were in stock and further stocks have been ordered. The Board noted the report and agreed the direction of travel.

The President encouraged Board members to contact her to do a joint blog.

Carol Harris left the meeting

5. Council Update

Geoff Earl spoke to this item. Council meets regularly to meet to discuss Covid-19 and particular items to ensure that business progresses despite the challenges. The Board noted the following:

AGM – it has been agreed that this will be held within the 15 months timescale set out in law. It was recognised that it might be a virtual meeting and options are being investigated.

Board & Committee meetings - It was also noted that there might be a difficulty in ensuring that meetings might be quorate and guidance had been issued.

The Governance Review – this has been received by Council and recommendations will be implemented.

Covid-19 – Council receives regular feedback on information/issues that have been received from members across the four countries. The Executive Team have been very responsive to the issues raised.

Discussion

Decision-making at branch level was raised. The Council member agreed to check with the Governance Support Committee and update the Board.

6. Trade Union Committee

The Board received the paper. It was noted that Graham Revie had been unable to attend the Board meeting.

Discussion

The Board noted the report.

Elsbeth Caithness joined the meeting

7. Safety Committee

The Chair welcomed Elspeth Caithness to the meeting. Since elected no meetings have been held and the report of the last meeting had not yet been agreed with the Chair of the Committee. Board members were invited to ask any questions.

The Director will discuss with the Committee member the Safety Network. Health and Safety is a matter of particular attention currently and a staff group has been set up to ensure consistency.

8. Overview & Scrutiny committee

Ann MacCrimmon spoke to this item. The Board noted that the Red/Amber/Green status is being reviewed.

Discussion

The Board noted the report.

9. Meeting and decision-making guidance for Boards

The Board noted the paper.

10. Professional Nursing Committee

The Board noted the report.

11. Joint Reps Committee

The Board noted the report.

12. Nursing Support Worker Committee

The Board noted the report.

13. Student Committee Report

The Board noted the report.

14. Board members' Reports

The Board noted the reports.

15 Any other Business

PPE – changing of guidance has been a challenge. Sterilisation of visors was being tested. It was noted that visors are single or sessional use. the guidance is clear about the use. If members were being asked to clean visors this should be reported through the correct channels and also noted with RCN Officers.

The psychological impact of the current circumstances should be considered for members as they may have been impacted by circumstances both within their work-place and outwith. It was noted that this issue had been raised by the RCN with the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport and this will be discussed further. The type of modelling the Scottish Government will be using will be raised. Board members were asked to update the Director with any information they had regarding this issue.

Some community teams were being contacted and worked with currently.

Board members were reminded to contact the Chair or Director with any ideas for good practice or improving virtual meetings. Microsoft Teams was being used in some areas and could be considered for future virtual meetings. Council is hoping to use Teams for all virtual meetings going forward.

On 26 June 2020 the Board was asked to vote by email on the setting up of a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Network. Twelve votes were returned by the deadline. All votes received agreed that a BAME Network should be started in Scotland. Board members indicated that it is important not to forget other minority groups eg LGBTQ+.

End of Open Session of the Board meeting.