

## South West Regional Board - Open Meeting Agenda

**Date:** 11 June 2025

**Time:** 13:00 - 15:30

**Venue:** Conference Room - RCN South West, Exeter Office

Time	No.	Item	Information

### Standing Items

	1.	<b>Welcome &amp; apologies for absence</b> <i>Chair, Cathy Ellingford</i>	(Pages 4 - 7)
	2.	<b>Minutes and actions from the previous meeting</b> <i>Chair, Cathy Ellingford</i>  2.1. To agree the accuracy of the minutes 2.2. To review the actions from the last meeting 2.3. Matters arising not covered by the Agenda	(Pages 8 - 13)
	3.	<b>Key messages from Closed session of Board meeting</b> <i>Chair, Cathy Ellingford</i>	
	4.	<b>Items to declare under Any Other Business</b> <i>Chair, Cathy Ellingford</i>  To highlight any issues for discussion later in the meeting that are not included on the agenda	
	5.	<b>Decision and Discussion Items</b> <i>Chair, Cathy Ellingford</i>  5.1. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	(Pages 14 - 19)

<b>6.</b>	<b>Consultation Items</b> <i>South West Regional Director, Susan Masters</i>	
6.1.	Independent Health & Social Care <i>IHSC Lead for SW, Sarah Winfield Davies</i>	(Pages 20 - 21)
6.2.	Integrated Care Board (ICB) Update <i>South West Regional Director, Susan Masters</i>	
6.3.	Pay <i>South West Regional Director, Susan Masters</i>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Communications</b> <i>Communications Manager, Tracey Roberts</i>	
7.1.	Congress Review <i>South West Council Member, Ashleigh Taylor</i> <i>South West Regional Director, Susan Masters</i>	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Task &amp; Finish Groups</b> <i>Chair, Cathy Ellingford</i>	
<b>9.</b>	<b>Council Report</b> <i>South West Council member, Ashleigh Taylor</i>	(Pages 22 - 25)
<b>10.</b>	<b>Reports from Governance Committees</b> <i>TU Committee member, Jane Matthews</i> <i>PN Committee member, Colin Baker</i>  To acknowledge the content of the minutes from the Governance Committees and to discuss any relevant issues raised	
10.1.	Trade Union Committee	(Pages 26 - 33)
10.2.	Professional Nursing Committee No report available since last board meeting	
10.3.	Stewards Committee No report available since last board meeting	
10.4.	Nursing Support Workers Committee	(Pages 34 - 38)
10.5.	Health & Safety Committee No report available since last board meeting	
10.6.	Students Committee	(Pages 39 - 41)
10.7.	Reps Committee	(Pages 42 - 48)
<b>11.</b>	<b>Items from Governance</b>	

	12.	Any Other Business	
15:30		Close of meeting	

**Date of next meeting: Date Not Specified**

**Membership:** Helen Acock, Colin Baker, Kirsten Bland, Cathy Ellingford (Chair), Reni George, Fiona King, Jane Matthews, Leonore Newson, Stuart Pearson, Netty Snelling, Ashleigh Taylor (Council Member - South West) and Amy Williams

**Tony Aspinall**  
**Governance Adviser**  
**01392 357001**

# The RCN Respect Charter

The commitments below outline how all RCN stakeholders including staff, members and customers must approach working with each other at all times.

1. We acknowledge that our behaviour has an impact on others.
2. We value our differences and recognise that we will not always share the same views.
3. We grow from our mistakes by working and learning together.
4. We respect and preserve confidentiality.
5. We treat everyone with courtesy and respect, and act with integrity at all times.



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**Respect charter**  
our commitment to  
working together

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**RCN Respect Charter**  
our commitment to  
working together

# Agenda Item 2.

## Regional Board Open Minutes

Royal College of Nursing South-West Regional Board

Minutes of Meeting held on

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Exeter Regional Office

Open Minutes

### **In Attendance**

CE - Cathy Ellingford  
LN – Leonore Newson  
AT – Ashleigh Taylor  
KB - Kirsten Bland  
JM– Jane Matthews  
NS - Netty Snelling  
SP – Stuart Pearson  
CB - Colin Baker  
HA – Helen Acock  
Vacancy  
Vacancy  
Vacancy

Board Chair & Devon Branch  
Vice Chair & Cornwall Branch  
Council Member  
Dorset Branch  
Trade Union Committee  
Wiltshire Branch  
Plymouth Branch  
Professional Nurse Committee  
Gloucestershire Branch  
Greater Bristol Branch  
Somerset Branch  
Bath Branch

### **Staff in Attendance**

Susan Masters  
Tony Aspinall  
Vicky Lander

RCN, Regional Director  
RCN, Regional Service Manager & Board Administrator  
RCN, Regional Administrator & Board Minute Taker

### **Apologies**

Steve Pulsford  
Tracey Roberts

RCN, Head of Operations  
RCN, Regional Comms Manager

### **Guests**

VB – Vicky Brotherton  
Safety Committee  
MS – Matthew Stewart  
Stewards Committee



<b>Item 1.</b> (Pages 3 - 6)	<b>Welcome &amp; apologies for absence</b> <i>Cathy Ellingford, Board Chair – South West Region</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CE welcomed everyone to this open session.</li> <li>• Welcomed VB to open session.</li> <li>• Apologies:</li> </ul>
<b>Item 2.</b> (Pages 7 - 11)	<b>Minutes and actions from the previous meeting</b> <i>Cathy Ellingford, Board Chair – South West Region</i> <p><b>2.1 To agree accuracy of the minutes –</b>  VB – mentioned credit cards / pop up banners – TA will liaise with TR re actioning credit cards and banners.</p> <p><b>2.2 To review the actions from the last meeting –</b> No actions.</p> <p><b>2.3 Matters arising not covered by the agenda –</b> None</p>
<b>Item 3.</b>	<b>Key messages from closed session of the board meeting</b> <i>Cathy Ellingford, Board Chair – South West Region</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board agreed congress attendance list</li> <li>• Board agreed branch budgets for CPD events 2025</li> <li>• Vice board chair elected – Leonore Newson</li> <li>• EDI lead elected – Leonore Newson</li> <li>• SSEC to be discussed and lead to be agreed</li> </ul>
<b>Item 4.</b>	<b>Items to declare under Any Other Business</b> <i>Cathy Ellingford, Board Chair – South West Region</i> <p>None</p>
<b>Item 5.</b>	<b>Decision and Discussion Items</b> <p>None</p>
<b>Item 6.</b>	<b>Consultation Items</b> <p>None</p>
<b>Item 7.</b>  (Pages 12 - 20)	<b>Communications</b> <i>Tracey Roberts, RCN South West Communications Manager</i> <p><b>7.1 Communications Report</b>  TR currently out with Nicola Ranger in the South West visit. SM updating on behalf of TR.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social media, in November the RCN made the decision to withdraw from the platform X, along with Twitter. Now using</li> </ul>

	<p>Bluesky, LinkedIn, Instagram, and currently in the process of creating a regional Bluesky account.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WhatsApp groups are difficult to manage with regards to response charter. However, have kept some on going from strike action as a speedy route to get a message out.</li> <li>TR / SM asking: would the board like to keep the WhatsApp group for the board? Group discussed and CE proposed a board voting WhatsApp group only. LN echoed CE proposal. Group agreed the WhatsApp group needs to be purely the voting members of the board group only. There have been 3x WhatsApp groups created. 1. branch chairs 2. board members 3. branch officers. AT raised although not all of the board are voting members, but other contributors of the board group could have valuable intel to contribute. SM raised the group as a whole will still have the board Teams chat.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>ACTION:</i></b> CE will go back to TR with the board group discussions on board WhatsApp ideas and preferences and inform the group of some formal guidance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional blogs – TR asking the board group to provide a few lines of information and TR will create blog one from this.</li> <li>If there are any branch events planned, please let TR know in advance to allow time for these to be promoted.</li> <li>MPs coverage, and SM arranging these meetings.</li> <li>Comment - Matthew Stewart, media coverage on corridor care was great.</li> <li>TR reiterate the assistance comms are able to give the board group and branches, and to please reach out to TR / VF.</li> <li>TA asked the group what the board would prefer, would the board like the branch plans in the board files on Teams. SM offered the board group further assistance in what they'd like added into Teams and how to access. VB requested the respect charter is held within the Teams channel.</li> </ul>
Item 8.	<p><b>Reporting Bodies</b>  <i>Task &amp; Finish Groups</i></p> <p>This following discussion won't be a T&amp;F group as this will be an ongoing topic, but collective views and discussion taken place on EDI.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TA discussed options for a colleague to join LN as the Board EDI lead.</li> <li>VB feels the EDI lead will have positive engaging impacts when linking in with branches and trusts.</li> <li>Charlie Faulkner is the staff EDI lead, and LN to link in with CF for direction, and to report back to the board group.</li> <li>CF attends the National EDI group.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Item 9.</b> (Pages 21 - 23)</p>	<p><b>Council Report</b> <i>Ashleigh Taylor, Council Member South West Region</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is now an entirely new council group, so building relationships and ways of working.</li> <li>• Committee reports discussed that was received to council.</li> <li>• Briefing around humanitarian crisis that came off the back of Congress 2024.</li> <li>• Briefing around RCN academies and how to get the best from these.</li> <li>• Council feel it's positive having Nicola Ranger having a pragmatic challenging view.</li> <li>• Member led presentation; RCN urged to take action with regards to the Palestine atrocities.</li> <li>• Corridor care report was a high topic.</li> <li>• AT clarified he has been elected for SW region to represent and sit on Council – however AT doesn't represent the board directly, but his own views assists the board requests for council.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Item 10.</b>  (Pages 24 - 30)          (Pages 31 - 38)</p>	<p><b>Reports from Governance Committees</b> <i>Jane Matthews, TU Committee member.</i> <i>Colin Baker, PN Committee member</i></p> <p>To acknowledge the content of the minutes from the Governance Committees and to discuss any relevant issues raised.</p> <p><b>10.1 Trade Union Committee</b> Jane Matthews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TU committee has governance over the academy and now attend joint reps automatically which is 10 places. And if unable to go will advise asap so a place can be taken from the remainder of the region.</li> <li>• LN asked JM to ask the TU committee if it can be ring fenced for the amount of places TUC are allowed to go Joint Reps.</li> <li>• JM suggested completing a 'monkey pole' around EDI.</li> </ul> <p><b>10.2 Professional Nursing Committee</b> Colin Baker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a proposal going to council around governance for the institute.</li> <li>• SSEC ratios, with a new lead Kate – Ratios and fed back already reporting within many trusts. But need to look at how ratios are broken down.</li> <li>• There's and NMC review. And NMC will be attending the next committee meeting.</li> <li>• Nursing workforce standards have been reviewed to ensure they are cross referenced by the committee.</li> <li>• EDI strategy, with 37 progressing well.</li> </ul>

<p>(Pages 39 - 43)</p> <p>(Pages 44 - 46)</p> <p>(Pages 47 - 53)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No national forum updates.</li> <li>• Congress resolutions, 25 scheduled. With assisted dying as hot topic which will be at Congress.</li> <li>• Meeting jointly with TUC, to include a Student committee member and do this jointly twice a year.</li> <li>• SM gave update on NWF standards, and that the regional champions will link in with branches and patches.</li> <li>• CB updated that the final draft of the NWF standards have now been signed off.</li> </ul> <p><b>10.2.2</b> <b>Vicky Brotherton</b> Health &amp; Safety Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lost a space on the joint rep's event.</li> <li>• NHSE have put together a webinar on around violence and aggressive behaviour.</li> <li>• An item that's been accepted on the Congress agenda, is around ensuring employers keep staff safe at work.</li> <li>• Rep recruitment – looking to promote with stewards and learning reps the option to also become a safety rep.</li> <li>• Corridor care is a very hot topic.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b> SM said to add as topic onto CL&amp;D event to advise and encourage reps to look into being safety rep to assist corridor care.</p> <p><b>10.2.3</b> <b>Stewards Committee</b> Matthew Stuart</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There hasn't been a recent committee meeting.</li> <li>• MS asked the group if there are any issues to be raised or from the branches to please let him know.</li> </ul> <p><b>10.3 Nursing Support Workers Committee</b> – Report included in papers.</p> <p><b>10.4 Students Committee</b> - Report included in papers.</p> <p><b>10.5 Reps Committee</b> - Report included in papers.</p>
<p><b>Item 11.</b></p>	<p><b>Items from Governance</b></p> <p>None</p>
<p><b>Item 12.</b></p>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b> <i>Cathy Ellingford, Board Chair – South West Region</i></p> <p><b>12.1 SW Reps CL&amp;D Events 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SM clarified to new process for CL&amp;D events by looking at consistency country wide.</li> <li>• 1 x F2F event, with an agreed agenda that's delivered across all regions.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3x separate online events, across each cluster, but these will be for the different rep types.</li> </ul>
	Close of meeting – 14:25

**Date of next meeting:** 11<sup>th</sup> June 2025

**Membership:** Cathy Ellingford (Chair), Leonore Newson (Vice Chair), Colin Baker, Kirsten Bland, Jane Matthews, Stuart Pearson, Netty Snelling, Helen Acock, and Ashleigh Taylor (Council Member - South West).

## Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Charlie Faulkner (Senior Regional Officer) and Molly McLeod (Regional Officer) are holding the next South West Global Majority Nursing network event on **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June, 17:00-18:00, online.**

This is a regional network created for nurses and support workers from the global majority to hear from staff about their experiences and challenges, learn how the RCN can better support and highlight support already available.

This is the second meeting of this regional network with one held earlier in the year.



**Southwest Region ED&I Plan 2025**

**LEAD:** Charlie Faulkner **SUPPORTED BY:** Tony Aspinall

**Core team:** Susan Masters, Nicola Browning, Steven Robertson, Molly McLeod, Chris Ashworth, Jessie Tame, Sue Sturman & Lynn Bowman

**BOARD MEMBER:** All board members

Activity Description	Lead/Staff Members	Deliverable Description	Progress	Delivery Date
The Southwest region will support members with workplace discrimination issues through case management	Steve Pulsford /Susan Masters	Quarterly report to Management Team detailing demographic profile of region (age; gender and ethnicity)	Quarterly case audits	Quarterly

		Attend ED&I leads meeting and disseminate information and good practice guidance to region at Regional Team Meetings		
The Southwest region will utilise WRES (Workforce Race Equality Standard)/ WDES data with employers through partnership forums.	SRO's/RO's	<p>Work closely with External Partnership lead to identify a consistent approach at partnership forums</p> <p>SOs and ROs to discuss WRES data with their respective organisations within their patch and identify/support steps to address any issues identified</p> <p>Encourage reps and officers to request a seat on EDI steering groups operated by NHS employers in their respective patches</p>	To discuss at RMT (Regional Management Team) meetings to gain information from employers.	Ongoing
The Southwest region will liaise with each member on enquiries/cases ensuring that ED&I issues are covered	SRO's/RO's	Follow CMS policy regarding ED&I	Case Audits	Ongoing



To ensure all branches have an EDI lead to support all regional/branch activity.	Charlie Faulkner/SRO's	All branches contacted at AGM and follow up by TA.		March
The Southwest region will increase our IEN membership.	SRO's/RO's	Attending IEN induction events. Promote RCN at branch/Trusts. Arrange IEN online events in the Southwest.		Ongoing
The Southwest region will aim to increase the IEN representation in local workplace Stewards, Learning & H&S Reps	SRO's/RO's	Senior Officers and Regional Officers will encourage applications from IEN members to become activists		Ongoing
To deliver disability/Neurodiversity training to SRO's/RO's and representatives at CL&D events.		To deliver presentation on support to our members with disability concerns/issues in their workplace, enhancing knowledge on this subject Activist Development days will incorporate diversity within the programmes		Ongoing
Support PRIDE events throughout the region linking to Trust events where possible	All Branch EDI Leads	Facilitate Branches to support local PRIDE events by:		June/July/August

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raising awareness of events.</li> <li>• Accessing and providing RCN branded materials</li> </ul>		
The South West region will celebrate Black History Month	All Branch EDI leads	<p>Facilitate Branches to promote and celebrate BHM by linking to any Trust event or co-ordinating a plan to display appropriate material</p> <p>Region to provide literature/promotion materials to support this activity</p>		October
To establish working relationships with all Trust EDI leads and independent workplace EDI leads.	Charlie Faulkner/ Tony Aspinall	To link up via Teams to encourage communication between Trust/Independent EDI leads and RCN EDI leads.		Ongoing
Member survey to Identify areas of interest in EDI within organisations	Charlie Faulkner/Comms team	Create EDI survey to promote mbr engagement in strategy and to focus resources where needed.		ongoing
IEN Workshop	<b>Venue: Bristol Commonwealth House</b>	<b>Unlock Your Potential (Learn, Grow and Thrive)</b>		<b>Date: 14th June 2025</b>



## South West Regional Board

11 June 2025

Item. 6a

### **Sarah Winfield-Davies: Lead Nurse, Independent Health and Social Care (IHSC) South West.**

#### **RCN National Workstream**

- Co-lead on Nursing Support Worker Workstream

#### **Role Updates for South West Members**

- Quarterly updates sent via email
- Social media posts (ongoing)

#### **South West IHSC Rep Network**

- Chair bi-monthly Network Meetings for all South West IHSC reps

#### **IHSC Employers**

- Visits to/discussions with South West IHSC workplaces to discuss the RCN IHSC Professional Offer (\*including RCN IHSC Employment Standards and RCN Nursing Workforce Standard Champions)
- Facilitate blogs/magazine articles to showcase/raise the IHSC profile

#### **Conferences/Events (Regional and National)**

- Speaker slots re: IHSC Lead Nurse role and RCN IHSC Offer
- Host RCN stand

#### **RCN Branches**

- Speaker slots to discuss RCN IHSC Lead Nurse role and RCN IHSC Professional Offer

#### **Membership**

- South West Social Care Nursing Advisory Council (SCNAC) member.
- National Institute Healthcare Studies (NIHSC) South West, Care Home Special Interest Group
- Queens Nursing Institute (regional and national groups including Care Home and IPC Network)

#### **Collaborative Working Relationships (External Stakeholders)**

- Skills for Care (Regional and National)
- South West NMC Regulation Adviser
- South West NIHR Settings Lead
- Chief Nurse for Adult Social Care (National)

## South West Regional Board

11 June 2025

Item. 6a

- Care and Support West Care Association (Bristol)
- Partners in Care (Dorset)
- Devon Training Hub (Devon)
- Learning Development Centre (Devon and Cornwall)
- Devon County Council Provider Engagement Network (PEN)

### **2025 IHSC online Events (National)**

#### **\*Co-organiser and facilitator**

1. Wellbeing in the Workplace
2. End of Life Nursing
3. Care Home Nursing
4. Leadership
5. Vaccination
6. Fundamentals of Nursing

### **Care Home Open Week plans (June 2025)**

- Visit to care homes
- National online event (Care Home Nursing)

### **NSW Day Plans (November 2025)**

- Visits to workplaces
- National Webinar (Fundamentals of Nursing)

### **Listening Events**

- Social Care Challenges (Cornwall) with SRO

# Agenda Item 9.



## **Summary of the confidential and open Council meetings held on 09 April 2025 and 10 April 2025**

1. We held a two-day hybrid meeting on 09 and 10 April 2025. We were pleased to welcome our newest Council member, Tristan Griffin.
2. We started our confidential meeting with an update on the Strategic Review of Congress at which we discussed and agreed the principles that will shape proposals for the future of Congress. The background to the review was explained and other important considerations which are key to the future format of Congress were also highlighted e.g. sustainability, significant developments in technology and ways of working and an increase in membership. We also approved the report of Congress 2024, containing an update on the 25 items that Council agreed should be progressed, which will be shared with members shortly.
3. We undertook an introductory training on risk management at which we discussed the RCN risk appetite and reviewed the Group Risk Register. This session was part of our ongoing programme of learning and development.
4. We approved the new Learning and Development Policy for Council Members and changes to the Running Meetings Policy and guidance for members wishing to submit an item for a Council agenda.
5. We were given an update on the 5 Year Strategy, including the top ten priorities for the College. Following which, we were given an update on pay from the Executive Director of Legal and Member Relations and Executive Director for Scotland. The importance of getting members to engage in the grade 5 – 6 progression was emphasised, with the work carried out in Scotland outlined, although it was acknowledged that this is one aspect of a much wider set of considerations that the RCN are driving forward to enact change.
6. We approved the elections policy and process, the procedures and timelines for the 2025 elections/appointments. Changes have been made to the policies and procedures, which will apply first to the imminent Agenda Committee Member elections, which will provide greater clarity around the eligibility criteria for those standing for election/appointment and strengthen the procedures.
7. We agreed our Ways of Working Guidelines, which set out principles to support collaborative working between the Executive Team and Council.

8. Having received an update on the recent Governance Committee we approved its revised terms of reference and the disestablishment of the Governance and Culture Review Joint Partnership Board. The disestablishment of the Joint Partnership Board is a reflection of the progress the College has made against the recommendations of the Governance and Culture Reviews.
9. Our meeting continued with a focus on governance which saw us approving:
  - The definition of ‘member involvement’
  - Changes to the committee terms of reference template
  - The Governance Operating Framework.
10. We concluded day one of meetings with a presentation focussing on our role at Congress and the practicalities involved in ensuring that we are able to fulfil our responsibilities throughout Congress. We look forward to listening to the debates and hearing directly from members.
11. Our second day of Council began with a discussion on the Regulations on Eligibility Requirements, which is a recommendation of the Governance and Culture Reviews. We approved the Regulations which will be implemented from next year. We also discussed resolutions for the 2025 AGM.
12. Our meeting continued with a focus on finance and performance, during which we had a preview of the new HR/Payroll and Finance System which will act as a ‘single source of truth’ and ensure the streamlining of processes across the organisation.
13. We reviewed and approved the updated Humanitarian Crises Framework and Guidance. This follows a request by RCN Congress to update the 2022 Framework and ensure its implementation. Along with other amendments, the revised Framework now reflects the introduction of the RCN’s International Academy.
14. We were updated on the Management Accounts. The importance of using business intelligence to ensure that we are well-led and able to deliver against our strategy was emphasised.
15. We were also updated on the Institute funding arrangements. The update made clear the focus on our objectives and what the Institute is delivering for our members.
16. As part of our continued learning and development programme, we were joined by our external auditors for some training on financial governance which covered how to interpret financial information and our role in ensuring the RCN manages its resources responsibly,
17. The RCNi Managing Director presented an update on RCNi activity. She talked about threats and opportunities presented by AI as well as initiatives underway to continue to support career development within the wider profession.

18. Our last item during the confidential session of Council was the Finance and Investment Committee report which included information about the investment portfolio and importance of ethical investments and provided an overview of asset allocation.
19. Following the adjournment of the confidential meeting, Council moved to an open session. The recording and papers for the open session are available to members on the website.
20. The Chair and Vice Chair reported that they had been honoured to attend the RCNF Impact Awards and encouraged Council members to view the videos about the work of the winners. Discussion of the awards led neatly into the first report received in the open session of Council, which was from the RCN Foundation. The interesting work in the research and innovation space was highlighted. Council members praised the inspiring work and particularly commended RCNF for its work in the branch of learning disability nursing.
21. The Chair of Council and President presented reports during the meeting on their activities and engagement on behalf of the RCN since January 2025. The extensive work of those in the officer positions on Council was noted.
22. Council was grateful for the inclusive report from Professor Nicola Ranger on the activities across all RCN directorates. She spoke about:
  - The extensive coverage of the RCN's Report on corridor care in the media which made a big impact
  - The work on band 5-6 programme and comparison with paramedics and midwives, and the importance of equity with regards to pay.
  - The vital work of the help centre which received 19000 calls in Q1.
  - The significant work the RCN is doing in advocating for members who are going through the NMC Fitness to Practice Process, ensuring that they are fully supported.
  - The reversal of Cardiff University's decision to close its Nursing School, which is extremely good news.
  - The announcement of the pay officer in Scotland, which is welcome and which will hopefully encourage other UK governments to negotiate on pay.
  - The news that NHS England (NHSE) will be going into the Department of Health and Social Care and the cuts to the Integrated Care Boards (ICB). The RCN supports and represents nearly 3500 nurses in NHSE and ICBs including many nurse leaders. The RCN is also concerned about the stretched financial situation, an example of which is registered nurses being asked to work at reduced bank rate.
  - The importance of 'staying close' to the current challenges for student nurses – particularly hearing concerns about registered nurse positions for students qualifying this year.



23. The Open Session of Council also included updates on the continued work of the following committees:
- Professional Nursing Committee – particularly highlighted was the work to revise the nursing workforce standards, which will be launched at Congress; the PNC recommendation that Council approve the updated Statement on Assisted Dying; and, a summary of the work of the Forums.
  - Trade Union Committee.
  - Nursing Support Workers (NSW) Committee – current work of this committee focuses on ensuring that NSW get the recognition they deserve, for example, the committee is looking at the definition of support for the role of NSW in other European countries.
  - International Committee – the committee reported that it was delighted to receive a briefing on the work being done on Internationally Educated Nurses and the imminent publication on their lived experiences. Also highlighted were concerns about the aid cuts in the World Health Organisation and the impact on nurses. In other news, the committee is continuing to grow activities and has enhanced its work with the two principal committees – the Professional Nursing Committee and the Trade Union Committee.
  - Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee – Council was introduced to the newly appointed external Chair of the Committee, Dr Arun Verma, who presented the report. He reported that the EDI Annual Report is due to be published soon and it includes interesting items reflecting on reports on corridor care as well as a deep dive on the Cultural Ambassador Scheme. The Committee are concerned with ensuring that the work on the strategy is on track.
24. We finished our meeting with a full and frank discussion about the challenges and difficulties faced by Student nurses and what the RCN can do to make the nursing profession more attractive to those choosing their future careers.

Carmel O'Boyle, Chair of RCN Council



## Trade Union Committee Report to Members – February 2025

### Trade Union Committee 6 February 2025

1. We welcomed Vicky Brotherton, the new Chair of UK Health & Safety Reps Committee to her first meeting as an observer alongside the 2 other UK Reps Committee Chairs who had recently been re-elected.
2. An election was currently open to the vacant South East seat on our Committee, with the closing date for nominations 10 February 2025.
3. As a matter arising from the review of the minutes from our last meeting, we discussed in greater detail the work the RCN was taking forward related to bank work and the issue that members were often being paid at the bottom of Band 5 instead of at their substantive rate.
4. The RCN's position is that members working additional hours should be paid overtime as opposed to bank rates and work was underway both nationally and at regional level on this issue, including escalating to NHS Staff Council new NHS England proposed targets to reduce bank and agency spend which would impact pay terms and conditions.
5. We noted decisions we had taken via email since our last meeting in November approving the RCN response to the consultation on NHS national nursing profiles (band 7-9) and approving the Northern Ireland Board's decision to consult via electronic ballot, eligible members on the 2024-2025 AfC pay offer and the Board's decision to make no recommendation on this offer.

### Reps project 2025-27

6. Plans were outlined for an Activism Academy 3-year reps project to deliver an increase in the capacity and structures needed in place to facilitate a significant increase in RCN rep numbers in line with strategic priorities.
7. In order to treble the number of reps, ambitious plans were required to build a sustainable and scalable rep structure within the RCN, enabling effective recruitment, training, and support of new reps, while ensuring retention of existing reps, to support the diverse needs of the membership.
8. The reps project would be undertaken in two phases, with four workstreams in each phase focussed on key areas of work.
9. Phase one during 2025-26 would focus on the foundational planning work required to become 'rep ready', including workstreams covering reviews of

the rep role, Facility Time, rep support and supervision standards and of expression of interest and disaccreditation processes.

10. Phase 2 in 2027 would transition to rep recruitment, including enhancing recruitment efforts and succession planning to increase rep numbers, particularly in underrepresented groups and workplaces, and to improve the overall impact of reps across the UK.
11. A project board of key stakeholders would oversee delivery of the project and report to the Trade Union Committee as well as one of our members being co-chair; we welcomed that members would be involved throughout the governance structure for the project, including from the Reps Committees, in a co-production approach.
12. Whilst we were very supportive of this much needed piece of work and the imperative of being ambitious, we sounded a note of caution regarding deliverability, including the accompanying staffing resourcing required to support a much large rep community; we also strongly emphasised how vital a parallel focus on nurturing and utilising the skills of existing reps was, alongside recruiting a significant number of new reps.
13. We agreed the proposed project structure for the Reps Project 2025-27.

The purpose, learning outcomes and allocation of places at RCN UK Joint Reps Conferences

14. Two in-person UK Joint Reps conferences are delivered annually as part of the learning and development programme for reps, with places allocated to regions and countries proportionally according to their rep numbers.
15. We had asked that the current ringfenced allocation of 4 places for Trade Union Committee be revisited to include the whole Committee to enhance our visibility as key governors for the RCN.
16. We agreed a proposal to increase by 10 the number of ringfenced places for Trade Union Committee members at UK Joint Reps Conferences.
17. We also agreed a clear stated purpose to the Conferences and differentiated learning outcomes for each session to support better planning and delivery that met RCN Quality Assurance Standards.

Workplace Teams

18. An overview was provided of a new RCN pilot project to be trialled called workplace teams as part of helping deliver the shift towards an organising model of business for the RCN as set out within the 5-year strategy, and which would necessitate sustainable member structures to increase the capacity of the RCN to address issues that matter to nursing, including at local level.

19. The workplace teams pilot aimed to provide a framework within which RCN members within an employer could come together to create change, provide a network of support, increase RCN visibility and spread the associated workload.
20. The objective was to strengthen the position of all RCN members in the workplace, including reps, with action to be undertaken as a unit using a 'strength in numbers' approach.
21. The first stage of the pilot would be roll out at 25-30 workplaces across the 4 countries, with a minimum of 2 members per team and which could include those already in formal RCN roles such as reps; the aim was not to replace reps or branch members but to support and strengthen RCN activity.
22. The offer to members of the workplace teams would include a bespoke training programme, named organiser support as a point of contact and drop-in sessions across the cohorts.
23. The scalability of this workplace teams approach would be tested as part of the full evaluation forming phase 2 of the project as a key tool for moving to an organising model for the RCN.
24. We gave our broad support for the pilot and welcomed assurances that reps in the workplace would be engaged from day 1 in order to avoid any misconceptions that workplace teams were 'taking over' the rep role.

#### Report from the Member Experience and Journey Strategy Board

25. We received our regular update from the Board.
26. As part of the service design workstream to encourage more member self-service, a [Problems at Work Checklist](#) had been launched on the website to provide advice and guidance to members on resolving common workplace problems before approaching the RCN for representation.
27. In relation to GDPR compliance for reps and members holding elected office, warning letters have been sent to those who remained GDPR non-compliant despite significant chasing, giving them three months to complete refresher training before action would be taken to disaccredit or remove them from office.
28. Overall satisfaction levels with RCN services remained very high and complaints very low, even with all feedback from dissatisfied members now being treated as complaints.
29. There remained ongoing high demand for Member Support Services (MSS) and for the first time, referrals for immigration services had exceed those for the counselling service.

Update on the steward portal development work

30. A demonstration was received on the latest version of the rebuilt Stewards portal as the first stage of ongoing work to improve the accessibility and usability of the rep's Case Management System (CMS).
31. We suggested a number of improvements to the portal design and stressed the importance of roll out of improvements to the wider system to the benefit of all reps as soon as possible, especially to support accurate capture of the broad range of activities undertaken outside of casework.

#### 2025 Reps recruitment and retention targets

32. We received proposed 2025 reps targets which had been set at patch level and aggregated up to a country/regional level to give more meaningful targets; overall, delivery of the targets would equate to an average 34% increase on the 2024 reps figures.
33. We expressed some concern regarding the high figures projected and the associated pressures on regional and country offices in supporting these reps, although the importance was also recognised of being ambitious within the context of the RCN's very low rep ratio and for the ultimate benefit of both reps and members.
34. We received assurance the Executive Team are conscious of the pressures on regional and country offices and there had been recent investment in resourcing at this level, although a further workload review around casework was also planned.
35. Work was underway to look at how to make casework leaner and more efficient, including providing support at earlier stages before becoming a formal case.
36. We approved the proposed 2025 reps recruitment and retention targets.

#### Autumn 2024 Reps Committee report

37. The report from the autumn round of Reps Committee meetings was noted.

#### New deal for working people and the Employment Bill

38. An update was received on the RCN's public affairs lobbying activity.
39. A strategy for lobbying around the government's new Employment Rights Bill has been developed to secure a clear role for the RCN at the heart of employment rights policy making; key RCN priority areas were restoring trade union rights, sectoral bargaining for adult social care, advancing women's workplace rights and public sector procurement.
40. The objective was for the clear voice of nursing to be reflected within the Bill and the RCN was seeking to progress this through the submission of amendments, providing briefings, meeting with MPs and lobbying

ministers, and submitting formal written evidence including to official consultations.

41. Areas the RCN was pushing strongly included seeking flexible, future-proofed balloting methods going forward and ensuring statutory ballots were not too prescriptive or burdensome, extending statutory bereavement leave for pregnancy loss and flexibility related to parental leave as well as improving enforcement mechanisms around equal pay.
42. The Government's implementation plan timeline was the introduction of regulations in early 2026, with the main legislative provisions in place by mid-2026.

#### Hazardous Medical Products position statement

43. We considered a proposed draft RCN Position Statement on Hazardous Medicinal Products outlining a call for action by the UK government, regulators and employers.
44. Hazardous Medicinal Products (HMPs) are pharmaceutical substances used predominantly for cancer treatment as cytotoxic/cytostatic or antineoplastic drugs and which have the potential to cause effects in people other than the patient being treated including nursing staff.
45. There is currently no specific UK legislation or guidance for HMPs and the UK is even further lagging behind following a recent strengthening of the law and accompanying guidance around HMPs in the EU.
46. An RCN position statement has been drafted to clearly outline the risk to nursing staff from exposure to HMPs and the specific issues that need to be addressed including introducing a minimum standard in terms of guidance, thorough risk assessments and education and training of nursing staff. There is also a call for a confirmed list of HMPs to be adopted in the UK.
47. We unanimously confirmed the RCN Position Statement on Hazardous Medicinal Products.

#### Update on pay across the UK

48. An update was given on pay across the four countries and Crown Dependencies.
49. The RCN continued to take forward a significant piece of work to progress influencing and representation across all 4 countries in relation to General Practice Nursing (GPN), with a December UK-wide GPN pay survey receiving over 1,500 responses from GPNs to help shape campaigning related to their pay, terms and conditions going forward.
50. Members employed by the States of Guernsey had been consulted at the end of 2024 on a 5% 2025 pay offer and had voted to accept the offer.

51. The RCN was calling on the government to enter direct negotiations for the 2025-26 pay round, in light of the decision not to submit evidence this year to the NHS Pay Review Body (PRB) due to ongoing concerns over its fitness for purpose.
52. We will need to convene a special meeting once the PRB published their report to determine the RCNs next steps.
53. The Welsh Government has yet to confirm whether they would be relying on the PRB for this year's pay round or direct negotiations.
54. Lack of progress remained a concern regarding the sub-groups set up to take forward implementation of the non-pay elements of the 2022-2024 pay awards across England, especially around nurse career progression and the pay setting process.
55. In Northern Ireland, members employed by Health and Social Care had voted in a December 2024 consultation to accept the 2024-25 pay award; the uplift was now being implemented, although backpay was being staggered to shift some payments to the 2025-26 financial year.
56. A joint union 2025-26 pay claim had been submitted in Scotland seeking an above inflation rise alongside structural reform to AfC; pay negotiations were expected to commence following the confirmation of the Scottish Government Budget.
57. The agreed review of band 5 nursing roles in Scotland continued to progress, with over 600 completed member applications to date; there would be significant, sustained, member engagement activity taking place during the next 6 months to promote the review and support members.
58. Job Evaluation (JE) materials on the website have been revised and updated to encourage NHS members across the UK to request a job evaluation and there has been an increase in the number of cases, including group cases.
59. We considered a late paper circulated via email on 5 February 2025 updating on a Manx Care pay offer for 2024-25; the North West Board had only met on 4 February 2025.
60. The RCN alongside the other trade unions were involved in pay negotiations for the 2024-25 pay round for staff employed by Manx Care, the organisation responsible for delivery of the National Health and Care Service (NHCS) on the Isle of Man.
61. A consultative ballot was held with eligible RCN members in November 2024 in relation to the employers 4% pay offer for 2024-25, with no back pay for those staff who had left Manx Care since 1 April 2024.
62. RCN members rejected the offer but the majority of staffside unions voted to accept and as such, the employer then determined to pay the uplift.

63. The Isle of Man Branch met last month to consider next steps and especially their interpretation that without the backpay restriction, the likelihood that RCN members would have accepted the offer.
64. They recommended to North West Board to test the appetite within the membership for industrial action by way of an online indicative ballot which the Board had subsequently approved.
65. We noted the position of the North West Regional Board and agreed that an indicative ballot be undertaken of RCN members employed by Manx Care on their intention to take strike action, or not, in respect of the 2024-25 pay award be undertaken online and that no recommendation on how to vote be included in the ballot.

#### RCN Trade Union Priorities

66. We reviewed the latest version of the Employment Relations Workplan, with accompanying highlight reports, ahead of its replacement by the new Trade Union Priorities document.
67. The draft priorities were shaped by discussions which took place at our November 2024 workshop where we discussed our focuses for the upcoming year.
68. The key priority areas were NHS pay, terms and conditions, Independent Health and Social Care pay, terms and conditions, health, safety and wellbeing, member activism, member organising and RCN representative learning, development and improvement, with overarching aims and key objectives and activities for 2025 identified for each.
69. Clear Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) specific objectives had also been assigned for each underpinning workstream to ensure it was embedded throughout all key trade union activity.
70. We discussed the importance of Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs), especially increasing their awareness around the role of trade unions and encouraging them to join the RCN and to help fight bad practices in the workplace and welcomed that considerable RCN work was ongoing in this space.
71. Under any other business, we were updated that the RCN had raised directly with both NHS England and the NMC the issue recently raised at a Council meeting related to the NHS England digital badge accreditation scheme for Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANPs) in general practice within the context of concerns they were being weaponised in some areas. Although use of the badge was voluntary, the RCN would continue to keep a watching brief.

#### Committee Membership and attendance

Denise Kelly (Northern Ireland) (Chair)



Jackie Davies (Wales) (Vice Chair)

Usman Adeyemo (Student)

Mark Butler (West Midlands)

Dennis Greer (Nursing Support Worker)

Toby Kunkel (Scotland)

Jane Matthews (South West)

Helen Oatham (Eastern)

Sharon Osbourne (East Midlands)

Karen Sanders (London)

Roaqah Shafer (Northern)

Mike Travis (North West)

Rhian Wheater (Yorkshire and Humber)

Apologies were received from Helen Oatham.



## **Nursing Support Workers Committee Report to Members – February 2025**

1. The Nursing Support Workers Committee met in person at RCN HQ and via Microsoft Teams on 25 February 2025 with Dennis Greer (Trade Union Committee member) as the new Chair and Sharon Mitchel (South East) the new Vice Chair.
2. We were delighted to welcome new member, Hazel Taylor, to our meeting who was elected unopposed at the end of last year to the Yorkshire and the Humber seat.
3. We also welcomed Mark Jarnell as our new NSW member of Council and ex-officio member of the Committee. He takes over from Kevin Morley whose term came to an end on 31 December.
4. Since our last report, we have also said goodbye to Lorraine McLauchlan (Scotland) and Katherine Davis (Yorkshire and the Humber).
5. Voting in the election for the South West, Scotland and Northern seats on the Committee closed on 24 March. I am pleased to report that Oluwaseun Adebawale (Northern), Evan Keir (Scotland) and Paige Barsby (South West) have all been elected to take up post immediately. We look forward to meeting them all very soon.
6. As reported previously, there were no eligible nominations received for the East Midlands seat which currently remains vacant.
7. The report of our meeting on 25 February follows.

### **Annual Review of Committee Terms of Reference**

8. We carried out the annual review of our terms of reference and agreed that no amendments were required.

### **Professional Lead Update**

9. We received an update on progress against the Committee's work programme from Ofrah Muflahi, UK Professional Lead for Nursing Support Workers.

10. Following the debate at Congress 2024 *'that this meeting of RCN Congress asks the RCN to lobby the government on the mandatory regulation of the nursing support workforce'*, the Policy Team is now working on an RCN position statement on NSW regulation.
11. In parallel, work is moving forward on the Professional Framework workstream on assistive and supportive roles including the definition of the nursing support workforce and levels of practice (discussed later on the agenda).
12. We noted that the revised [First Steps](#) resource will be launched by the end of March 2025 and look forward to receiving a demonstration of this at our next meeting.

### **Chief Nursing Officer's Update**

13. We received an update from Lucy Muchina, acting Deputy Chief Nursing Officer, on recent RCN activity relevant to Nursing Support Workers.
14. We discussed publication of the RCN report '[On the Frontline of the UK's Corridor Care Crisis](#)' in January 2025 and the significant impact this has had in highlighting how widespread corridor care is across the UK.
15. We spent some time sharing our own experiences of corridor care, in particular in mental health settings where we expressed serious concern for the safety of patients and nursing staff. We were pleased to hear that the RCN has raised these concerns directly with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and continues to lobby for change.
16. We were updated on the #ProtectNurse campaign, concerns around the drop in students applying to study nursing along with associated concerns regarding the closure of Cardiff University's nursing programme, and the review of the Nursing Workforce Standards to strengthen their impact and usability for the nursing workforce at all levels.
17. In relation to assisted dying, we received an update on the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Private Members' Bill which is currently passing through the UK parliament.
18. We highlighted a number of other issues that we are seeing in our workplaces including nursing students being supervised by practice assessors who have received insufficient training, issues in GP surgeries where paramedics are being recruited rather than Registered Nurses, the lack of funding available for Nursing Associate top-up programmes to enable them to become Registered Nurses, and a lack of NHS band 5 roles.

### **Professional Framework Update**

19. We received a presentation on the Professional Framework workstream on assistive and supportive roles and discussed the proposed definition of the nursing support workforce and levels of practice. Members of the Committee have been closely involved in this work to date and we had already commented on two previous drafts of the definition by email so were happy to agree this.
20. Following phase one of this workstream to define the nursing support workforce and levels of practice, phase two will involve setting standards for the levels, where required.
21. This will remain as a standing item on our agenda while work continues.

### **Congress 2025 Planning**

22. As we only have one more formal Committee meeting before Congress, we spent some time discussing arrangements for Nursing Support Workers in Liverpool in May.
23. We discussed Committee arrangements including our voting and stand rotas and put in a request for some more NSW-branded merchandise as there has been huge demand for this in recent years.
24. We organised a Teams workshop to take place on 2 April to meet our new Committee members following the close of voting and brief them on arrangements for Congress. At that meeting we will start to think some more about the agenda items we want to join the speaker queues for and the Education, Learning and Development Programme events we want to participate in.

### **Review of NSW Day 2024/ Planning for NSW Day 2025**

25. We received a presentation on the evaluation of Nursing Support Workers Day 2024 and recognised that this had again been a huge success. We are extremely grateful to all those involved both on the day and behind the scenes.
26. We were pleased to see that Nursing Support Worker membership figures have continued to grow as a direct result of NSW day celebrations.
27. We have already begun planning for NSW Day 2025 on 23 November. As this falls on a Sunday this year, the now-annual conference will take place at RCN HQ on the Saturday (22 November).

### **Defining Member Involvement**

28. We were consulted on the proposed definition of 'member-led' and fed in our views alongside a number of the RCN's Boards and committees.

29. We noted that the RCN's governance operating framework enables decisions to be made at every level that are 'led' by members with over 1,000 governance roles held by members within the College. We highlighted that there are also a number of members holding the role of Nursing Workforce Standards Champion to promote the Standards and support workplace improvements.

#### **RCN Learn Demonstration**

30. We received a demonstration of RCN Learn and the improvements made to how the resources available for Nursing Support Workers will be presented following our feedback towards the end of last year.
31. We are delighted with the resource and will continue to promote it amongst our members. We did raise concern, however, that many Registered Nurses are unaware of the value of having portfolios for those who do not have to revalidate.

#### **RCN Magazine**

32. We noted a written update on recent articles published in the [RCN magazine](#) of relevance to Nursing Support Workers and planned future articles.

#### **Country/ Regional Reports**

33. We noted written reports on activity relevant to Nursing Support Workers in Wales and in the Eastern, South East, West Midlands, Yorkshire and the Humber and London regions.

#### **Updates to the Committee**

34. We noted updates from recent meetings of RCN Council, the Professional Nursing Committee, the Trade Union Committee and the Forums Governance Group.

**Dennis Greer**

**Chair, Nursing Support Workers Committee**

## **Committee Membership**

Mark Jarnell, RCN Council Member  
Tracie Culpitt, Professional Nursing Committee  
Dennis Greer, Trade Union Committee (Chair)  
Sunday Babanumi, North West  
Hazel Taylor, Yorkshire and the Humber  
Ilva Jones, West Midlands  
Sharon Mitchel, South East (Vice Chair)  
Sandra-Jane Stock, Eastern  
Geraldine Russell, Northern Ireland  
Catalina Cerlinca, London  
Dave Parry, Wales  
Evan Keir, Scotland (from 25 March)  
Paige Barsby, South West (from 25 March)  
Oluwaseun Adebawale, Northern (from 25 March)

The East Midlands seat on the Committee is currently vacant.

There were no apologies received for the February meeting.

The Committee next meets on 1 May 2025.



## **Students Committee Report to Members**

### **from meeting held on 8 April 2025**

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#### **Student Ambassador Role Descriptor**

1. The Committee noted the review of the Student Ambassador Role Descriptor being carried out by the Activism Academy ('Academy') to ensure it still made sense, aligned with what duties Student Ambassadors carry out, and aligned with what student members need of Student Ambassadors.
2. The academy would be inviting members of the Committee to attend a separate session and discuss in greater detail the role of the Student Ambassador, including what they do / should do / and should not do. Following which, a new role descriptor would be drafted and used across the RCN in recruitment and training.
3. It was accepted that whilst the current role descriptor included the necessary information, it was unnecessarily detailed and should be edited to ensure that it conveyed the key messages in fewer words, highlighting the key responsibilities of the role.
4. The Committee noted that the Student Ambassador role was unique to the RCN and that it provided an exceptional opportunity to cultivate and work with potential future leaders of the RCN.
5. It was felt that the RCN needed to improve its visibility at universities to ensure other trade unions did not get an advantage in student nurse recruitment. It could also use these opportunities to highlight and promote the role of the Student Ambassador.
6. *The Students Committee approved the timeline for the review of the Student Ambassador Role Descriptor.*

#### **Student Merchandise**

7. The Committee discussed plans for Student Merchandise with the Activism Academy.
8. It was important that merchandise was useful, fun and showed how much student members and activists were valued.
9. A new line of student merchandise was needed and the Activist Engagement team were looking to co-collaborate on potential designs this with the Student Committee.
10. The aim was to produce new merchandise in time for Congress in mid-May. Rolling stock would then be used at future student events.

11. It was asked that all merchandise aimed for use whilst on placement or on wards complied with known infection control procedures.

### **Encourage, Engage Empower session with the Activism Academy**

12. The focus of these sessions was to help support the Committee in developing skills and plans for:
  - Engaging with student members.
  - Encouraging students to be involved and active in the RCN.
  - Empowering the Committee and the wider student membership by identifying issues that matter and taking steps to change things for the better.
13. The Committee was invited to discuss what changes they would like help to achieve, what challenges they might face in doing this, and what support could help overcome these. An example was:
  - Mature students – the RCN needed to properly understand their needs, perhaps around finances (some evidence of how this was affecting, e.g., car leases). Navigating relationships with lecturers who may be around the same age. Lecturers often not time-tabled in a way that works for parents of people with caring responsibilities. To support overcome these challenges it was suggested to reach out to mature students, hold hybrid meetings to make them more accessible for those with commitments.

### **Sharing Local Intelligence**

14. Committee members shared local updates and their recent activities.
15. The Chair praised the work of Committee members for their efforts to reach out to student ambassadors, recognising that there were ongoing challenges to their engagement that would hopefully be addressed in the review of the Student Ambassador Role Descriptor.

### **Defining Member Involvement**

16. The Committee received a presentation on defining member involvement and shared its view on the latest definitions.

### **Congress**

17. The Committee was briefed on Congress arrangements ahead of the event being held on 12-15 May 2025.
18. Discussing Students Day on Tuesday 13 May, the Committee heard that this had been revised to reflect learning from 2024 Congress, including a room being reserved for student members to raise their thoughts with the Committee. Plans for the reception / engagement event in the evening were still being planned, including a potential networking event (inviting key staff and senior elected members).



Committee Membership

Natasha Green (Chair) - Eastern, Lorraine Greathead - North West, Graham Gibson - Northern Ireland, Elizabeth Moffat - Scotland, Mary Bichard - South East, Samantha Hawkins - Wales, Amy Walker - East Midlands, Emma Henry - Northern Ireland, Felix Adesanya - Council, Lauren Healan - Wales, Allycn Omoniyi - Northern, Aleynah Al-Ghafri - London, Joshua Parker-Walsh - West Midlands, Harry Hayes - South West, Usman Adeyemo – TUC

*Apologies for absence had been received from Lauren Healan, Allyson Omoniyi, Aleynah Al-Ghafri, Joshua Parker-Walsh, Harry Hayes, and Usman Adeyemo.*

RCN Staff

Lorna Mayles - Professional Lead for Students  
Natalie Zara – Executive Director of Governance  
Becki Winson – Lead for Activist Communities



## Country and Regional Boards

Title of Paper:	<p>Report of the UK Representative Committees</p> <p>UK Learning Reps Committee – 10 February 2025</p> <p>UK Health &amp; Safety Reps Committee – 13 February 2025</p> <p>UK Stewards Committee – 26 February 2025</p> <p>Joint Reps Committee – 13 March 2025</p>
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### UK Learning Reps Committee – 10 February 2025

1. We welcomed new Committee members Janine Compston (Northern Ireland) and Chris Starnes (Southwest) to their first meeting since their election.
2. No eligible nominations had been received for the reopened Wales and Yorkshire & Humber seats and a timetable for reopening the election in due course would be looked at.
3. We received an overview of the RCN careers offer to members and how Learning Reps could help to promote this valuable service including more strongly encouraging the member to make contact with their local Learning Rep as part of their prep for accessing the service.
4. The offer to members included support around job seeking such as CV writing, career coaching over the phone including help to rehearse interview answers, practice techniques and receive constructive feedback as well as significant online [RCN careers resources](#) tailored to different membership groups.
5. We were briefed on the Activism Academy's new RCN Reps Project 2025-27 to help meet the ambitious target within the 5-year RCN Strategic Plan to treble the number of RCN reps.
6. The project aimed to build a sustainable and scalable rep structure, enabling effective recruitment, training and support of new reps, while ensuring retention.
7. There would be 2 phases, the first focussed on the foundational planning work required to become 'rep ready', including making the landscape better for existing reps through workstreams looking at review of the rep role, Facility Time and rep support and supervision standards.
8. This would then transition to phase 2 kicking off in 2027 on rep recruitment, including enhancing recruitment efforts and succession planning to increase rep numbers, particularly in

- underrepresented groups and workplaces, and to improve the overall impact of reps across the UK.
9. We welcomed that formal plans were in place for this vital piece of work and that the Reps Committees would be represented on the project board of staff and key stakeholders to oversee delivery in a coproduction approach as well as the operational groups set up as each workstream of the project came online.
  10. We received our regular update report from the Member Experience and Journey Strategy Board (MEJSB).
  11. The rebuilt Stewards portal was due to be rolled out in late March 2025 as the first part of the wider development work to improve the accessibility and usability of the Case Management System (CMS) for all reps.
  12. As part of encouraging more member self-service, a [Problems at Work Checklist](#) was now available on the website to provide advice and practical steps to help members resolve common workplace problems before approaching the RCN for representation.
  13. We noted that GDPR compliance of reps and holders of elected office stood at around 85%, with a significant number of reps becoming due to complete refresher training this year.
  14. Overall satisfaction levels with RCN services remained very high and complaints very low, even with all feedback from dissatisfied members now being treated as complaints.
  15. An update was received on implementation of the new rep's Continued Learning and Development (CL&D) framework following completion of a review last year and of 3 extra CL&D days being developed covering negotiating skills, activism and being active, and pay.
  16. We suggested additional online resources or topics for bespoke CL&D days in England that would be of value to Learning Reps including improving skills to negotiate for learning and development and for skills in the workplace, wellbeing for staff and supporting joint and partnership working at workplace level.
  17. An overview was provided of key pieces of work the Nursing Department, now known as the Education Team within the Institute of Nursing Excellence, was working on.
  18. This included RCN Professional Services which provided a range of programmes and services to improve patient care and patient experience in the UK, including an RCN leadership offer and a demonstrating value masterclass.
  19. Work was also underway to increase the number of CPD programmes with academic credits offered by the RCN and accredited by Coventry University.
  20. We sought some clarification around the RCN Accreditation Service and welcomed that a deep dive was underway on the issues facing the nurse educator workforce, with a report on the findings due to be released in the next couple of months.

21. An update was provided on work underway to take forward the Congress 2024 items on the statutory provision of CPD and support for newly registered and student nurses.
22. We expressed frustration that the key output for the CPD debate of drafting a briefing and guidance for staff on how to lobby at government and workplace level did not go far enough, especially with the financial constraints facing employers and staffing pressures making release for training ever more difficult for frontline nursing staff.
23. Our Chair updated us on the programme for the March Joint Reps Conference in Bristol which had been reorientated around the corridor care crisis following release of the recent hard hitting RCN report.
24. We received an update on planning around Congress 2025 and reviewed and updated our workplan.

#### UK Health and Safety Reps Committee – 13 February 2025

25. We welcomed Vicky Brotherton (South West) in her first meeting as our new Chair as well as Martin MacGregor, newly elected to the Scotland seat.
26. We were pleased to also welcome back Leona Cameron following her year long career break: Leona and Kim Sunley would be job sharing going forward as Heads of Health, Safety and Wellbeing and as staff lead to the Committee.
27. Unfortunately, no nominations had been received to the reopened election to the Eastern seat on the Committee; a timetable for reopening the election would be looked at.
28. We had an agenda item on corridor care following the recent publication of the RCN's hard-hitting report centred around member's first-hand experiences of the current corridor care crisis from a survey of members in December and which powerfully demonstrated the widespread extent across the UK.
29. There were considerable associated health and safety themes identified included poor management systems, risk assessments not being reviewed or amended, a lack of additional protocols for escalation, fire exits being blocked, and an increase in manual handling around trolleys.
30. Associated work-related stress was a key issue as well as an increase seen in incidents of violence and aggression including verbal abuse and of sharps injuries.
31. The key ask for Health and Safety Reps was to undertake workplace inspections to feed into the evidence base and to help support this, a [corridor care and safe staffing checklist](#) had been developed which was available on the rep's hub.
32. We shared our experiences of recent workplace inspections including the stress, shock and very real distress of nursing staff put in these very challenging and unsafe situations trying to care for patients.

33. We also highlighted the knock-on impact of corridor care on reps when supporting members around this and the importance of stress risk assessment being undertaken as part of support and supervision to flag up any issues.
34. We received an update on work arising from the Congress 2024 debate on the issue of working and caring for patients in crumbling buildings and were given the opportunity to review the comprehensive RCN position statement developed covering the UK and which was inclusive of health and social care.
35. There would be two additional workstreams including the development of resources for H&S reps on building maintenance and information for members who work as registered managers in care homes.
36. We were updated that an RCN position statement had now been signed off by the Trade Union Committee in relation to Hazardous Medicinal Products (HMPs), pharmaceutical substances used predominantly for cancer treatment as cytotoxic/cytostatic or antineoplastic drugs.
37. HMPs had the potential to cause effects in people other than the patient being treated, such as nursing staff handling, administering and disposing of HMPs and those caring for patients being treated with HMPs and the UK was lagging behind the EU in terms of specific legislative protections.
38. The statement clearly outlined the risk to nursing staff from exposure to HMPs, the specific issues that needed to be addressed and an accompanying call for action.
39. An update was received on the work of the NHS Staff Council Health Safety and Wellbeing Partnership group which the RCN co-chaired which focussed on raising standards of health and safety within the NHS by working in partnership at a national level.
40. Work underway included a comprehensive update of the sharps safety document, the development of resources and the raising of awareness of the risks from asbestos to those working in healthcare buildings as well as pushing for a tripartite group including unions, employers and the HSE to lead in this area.
41. An overview was provided of the group's 2025-29 workplan and we welcomed that it strongly reflected the RCN's influence in terms of key health and safety priorities including work-related stress and suicide; work-related violence; fatigue and shift work and implementing learning from module 3 of the Covid inquiry.
42. We received our regular update report from the Member Experience and Journey Strategy Board including an update from the MSS counselling service.
43. An overview was received on the learning and development offer for H&S reps including the [Health & Safety A to Z](#) resource on the rep's hub, a new self-directed webinar on the subject of workplace inspections for all reps and an online workshop under development around risk assessments.

44. We were updated on the programme for the March Joint Reps Conference on the subject of the corridor care crisis.
45. We welcomed that there would be a workplace inspections refresher session as part of the fringe programme and that an aide memoire had been developed to support Learning Reps and Stewards to do an informal walk through of workplace areas to look at key issues in the absence of a formal inspection by a H&S rep.
46. We discussed Congress 2025 and were delighted to have had an agenda submission accepted on assaults on nursing staff and employer accountability; we would be approaching the District & Community Nursing Forum to see whether they would be interested in seconding the resolution.
47. Sharon Livermore had been secured as this year's John Goodlad speaker on the subject of domestic abuse as a workplace safety issue.
48. We received a presentation on the Activism Academy's new RCN Reps Project 2025-27 aimed to delivering an expansion in the capacity and structures needed to facilitate a significant increase in rep numbers in line with strategic priorities.
49. Whilst we welcomed the project, we expressed concerns that phase 2 focused on rep recruitment would not start until 2027, especially as the current number of RCN reps was so low, and H&S reps in particular critically low across the UK.
50. We reviewed our updated Committee workplan for 2025 and assigned committee leads for the various pieces of work.

#### UK Stewards Committee – 26 February 2025

51. We welcomed new Committee member Matthew Stewart to his first meeting following his election to the South West seat and noted that voting for the contested East Midlands seat on the Committee would close on 4 March 2025.
52. We were disappointed that there had been limited progress around pay since our last meeting in light of delays to the 2025-26 NHS Pay Review Body (PRB) process.
53. Although the RCN had taken the decision not to submit evidence this year due to continued concern that the PRB was unfit for purpose, the 2025-26 PRB report had yet to be published which was impacting on decision making on next steps.
54. We welcomed that RCN work was progressing to campaign for better pay, terms and conditions for General Practice Nurses as well as looking at issues around bank work in the NHS and equality pay gaps in relation to gender, race and disability.
55. We discussed the importance of reps in workplaces helping to drive forward the RCNs Job Evaluation campaign by encouraging Agenda for Change members to seek banding reviews, especially on a group basis and at Band 5 level, to apply pressure on the system which was widely recognised not to be currently working for nursing.

56. We flagged up concerns that the current rep community did not have the capacity however to help drive forward this work and that the related expectations were unrealistic.
57. We suggested that more resources should be made available to support RCN reps to have persuasive discussions with members to seek banding reviews, including the case for Band 6 to be the starting pay point for a Registered Nurse.
58. We discussed issues faced by members working bank, with employers increasingly paying Registered Nurses at Band 5 as opposed to their substantive rate of pay
59. We welcomed that a mapping exercise was underway to look at how widespread this was across the UK and at the variation in terms and conditions offered by different NHS banks in reflection of the current lack of consistency.
60. The RCN was pushing for a national bank policy covering all of the UK that was fair and appropriately reflected and rewarded the skill and experience of staff.
61. We received an update on the programme for the March Joint Reps Conference centred on the topic of corridor care.
62. We raised the issue of revisiting the number of places available at Joint Reps Conferences in light of them being heavily oversubscribed; at a time when RCN membership was increasing, the imperative was greater than ever that reps were engaged and supported.
63. An update was received on arrangements for Congress 2025.
64. We received our regular update report from the Member Experience and Strategy Board and a demonstration of the new rebuilt Stewards portal of the Case Management System (CMS).
65. This would be rolled out in late March 2025 as the first part of the wider development work to improve the systems accessibility and usability for all reps.
66. We asked that our Committee be involved in the final testing phase before go live.
67. We received a presentation on the RCN Reps Project 2025-27 which would start next month to help meet the ambitious target within the 5-year RCN Strategic Plan to treble the number of RCN reps through building of a sustainable and scalable rep structure, enabling effective recruitment, training and support of new reps, while ensuring retention.
68. We welcomed that the Reps Committees would be represented on the project board as well as on the operational groups set up as each workstream of the project came online.
69. We flagged up the importance of managing member expectations around the role of accredited reps and welcomed that there were plans to update the rep role descriptor which would help articulate and communicate the role better in terms of expectations.
70. We reviewed our workplan and agreed to schedule a workshop session at our next meeting to further explore the areas on which

we should focus to have the most impact and to set clearer outputs against which to demonstrate the Committee's value.

#### Joint Reps Committee 13 March 2025

- 71. The 3 Reps Committees met jointly ahead of the start of the March Joint Reps Conference in Bristol.
- 72. We received a briefing on arrangements for the Conference and requested that the number and allocation of places at Joint Reps Conferences be revisited to look at the feasibility of extending the offer to a greater number of reps in light of high demand.
- 73. The Committees expressed frustration that this issue had been raised at the October 2024 Joint Reps Committee but had not been progressed despite all 3 Committees being in support.
- 74. We had a workshop session on next steps for the Activism Strategy and explored in group work how we as Reps Committees can help support delivery.
- 75. We received a presentation on the new Workplace Teams pilot being rolled out to help the RCNs shift towards an organising model of business.
- 76. A presentation was also received on the proposed RCN definition of 'member-led' for adoption going forward.