

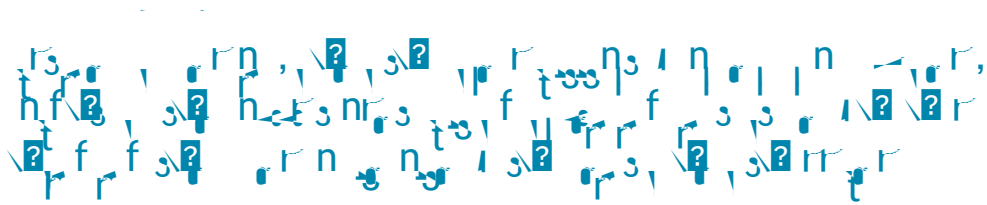
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ere's an ambitious programme of professional development workshops planned for HCSWs, including sessions on record keeping (see page 14) and leadership taking place on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday lunchtimes.

Several events with speci c relevance to HCSWs include sessions such as eye care, learning and disability nursing and sepsis. This year the RCN Fellows' fringe is on the role of HCAs and APs in nursing teams.

ere will also be the chance for members to play a special Care Certificate game which shares similarities with trivial pursuit but instead of general knowledge, covers eight of the Care Certificate topics. Visit [http://www.rcn.org.uk/carecertificate](#)

Why create the role?



“It wasn’t a professional business plan at all,” she says. “It was two sides of A4 focusing on the benefits the project would bring to the patients and the community. I kept it light-hearted and natural. I thought it was best to just be myself, rather than pretend to be an experienced business person.”

Her approach clearly struck a chord with the council, as they agreed to the

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gardening has many benefits. It’s relaxing, it gets you out in the fresh air and, if you grow your own produce, it can contribute to a healthy diet.

But Justine Jamieson, a health care support worker at Aneurin Bevan Health Board in South Wales suspected it could do more than that, and give patients real therapeutic benefits.

Justine knows what an impact being outside can have on someone’s mental health from her time working in the Monmouthshire Assertive Outreach team, which supports people with serious mental illness.

Her team used to take patients to a local farm to encourage them to spend time outside in a calming environment, and when this project stopped Justine was keen to replace it with something similar.

She came up with the idea of starting a garden and allotment for staff and patients to work on. She asked around and found a plot of spare land in Abergavenny, behind a council community care home.

The next step was to approach the council with a business proposal for the project. Despite having no previous business experience to speak of, Justine was undaunted.

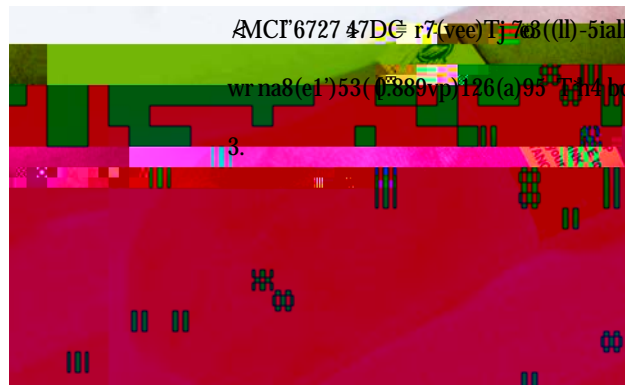


The rewards
speak for
themselves

away, rather than having to look through notes. When I talk to relatives, it's a big worry for them that their loved ones might not be eating and drinking enough, so I feel that this is something that could potentially save lives."

After getting her design protected by the Intellectual Property Office, Adeline has been promoting it through local media and has had enquiries from the NHS trust near where she works in Warminster. "I'm hoping this will be of good use to nursing staff to highlight if someone needs extra help as sometimes things don't always get passed on during shift handovers," says Adeline.

The "hydrate me" band is clearly identifiable and displays an easy to understand message, "please help, I am unable to eat or drink without your assistance." The band is waterproof, making it hard to smudge and it's difficult to remove meaning that patients



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Since the RCN was formed in 1916, the organisation has grown and adapted with the times, becoming more inclusive to represent the nursing profession as a whole. Recognising the contribution of HCAs and APs in providing high standards of patient care was part of this evolution.

“HCAs and APs have been vital members of nursing teams for many years,” says Tanis Hand, RCN Professional Lead for HCAs and APs. “When members voted for HCAs to join the RCN in 2001 it demonstrated how much support workers are valued, and their role has grown both externally and within the College since then.

“Having HCAs and APs on RCN Council – the RCN’s governing body – means that they are integral to every decision made.” Today the HP membership category, for HCAs and APs, is the fastest growing of all RCN membership categories.

The bigger picture

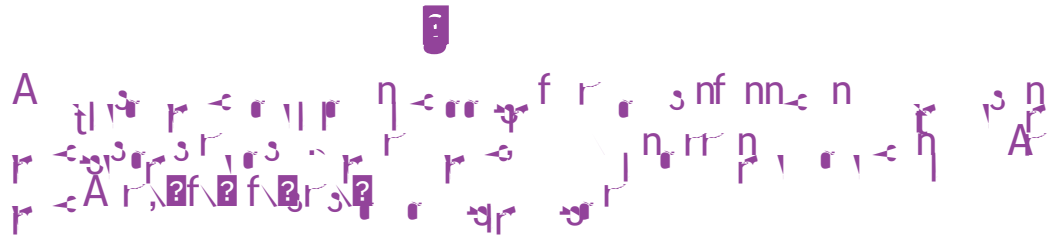
Daphne Regan was one of the first HCAs to join the RCN when she became a member on 31 May 2001. “I’m pleased the contribution of HCAs is being celebrated,” says Daphne. “When you’re not a registered nurse, it is easy to feel isolated, so the support of the RCN has made me feel like I’m part of the bigger picture.”

And in this centenary year, the RCN is eager to get more HCAs and APs involved to help strengthen the College over the years to come.

HCA and RCN activist Sagila

Iruthanikasalan (see cover and far right) is no stranger to embracing opportunities to shape the organisation’s work. Since joining in 2010 she has become highly involved in the College’s activity and is currently a branch officer. “I decided to take on a voluntary role with the RCN as it’s provided me so much support and I wanted to pass that on in some way. The RCN’s resources for HCAs, especially , have been extremely valuable to me,” says Sagila.

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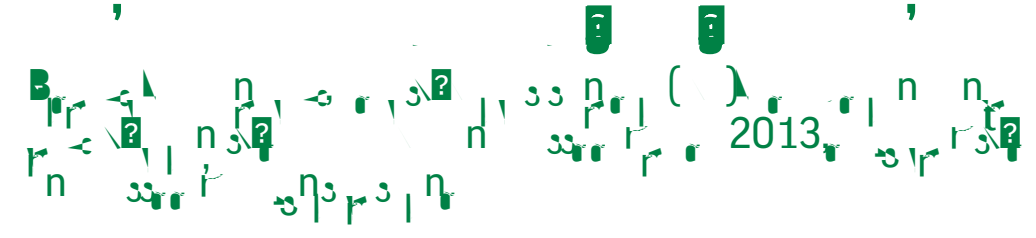
Records should be completed at the time or as soon as possible after the event.

All records must be signed, timed and dated if handwritten. If digital, they must be traceable to the person who provided the care that is being documented.

Make sure you're up date in the use of electronic systems in your place of work, including security, confidentiality and appropriate usage.

Records must be completed accurately and without any falsification. You need to provide information about the care given as well as arrangements for future and ongoing care.

Avoid jargon and speculation, as well as unnecessary abbreviations.



When possible, the person in your care should be involved in the record keeping and should be able to understand what the record says.

What does the HP committee do?

We make sure the voice of HCAs and APs is heard and that issues affecting you are tackled. The committee has representation from across the countries and regions. Every area is different and we bring all that expertise together from across the UK. The committee is here to protect HCAs and APs and ensure you get a good deal.

What are you most proud of?

Seeing the positive change to the positioning of HCAs and APs within the RCN. There is now a clear vision and the professionalism of HCAs and APs is getting the recognition it deserves.

What's on the radar over the next few months?

We'll be continuing to keep track of what is happening out there politically. In particular we will be focusing on the new nursing associate role (see pages 6-7) and the Care Certificate. What happens in one country has a knock-on effect across the UK so we need to stick together. We're stronger when we all work as one.

What will be a highlight for you?

RCN Congress! Every year I look forward to it even more. There's a real buzz about it and so much going on. Also importantly, we launch our elections to fill vacancies on the committee at Congress. If you're an HCA or AP, why not join us at the forefront and help fight for your co-workers and patients?

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