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DOMESTIC ABUSE

The RCN represents nurses and nursing, promotes excellence in practice and shapes health policies.

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Dame Sheila Quinn, 1920-2016

Former RCN President Dame Sheila Quinn died last month at the age of 96. Dame Sheila, who served two consecutive terms as President from 1982 to 1986, passed away peacefully on 8 December. An active RCN member throughout her career, she also served as Deputy President and Chair of RCN Council. She was awarded one of the earliest RCN fellowships in 1978, and in 1986 was made a life Vice President in recognition of her services to the College.

RCN Chief Executive Janet Davies said: "I was very saddened to hear news of Dame Sheila's death. She had a remarkable life, and the contribution she made to the RCN and the wider profession was immense."

Safer staffing

The RCN is seeking member feedback on draft staffing resources produced by NHS Improvement. The resources are aimed at those who make decisions about safe and sustainable nurse staffing levels. Acute adult inpatient care and learning disabilities are the first of seven clinical areas to be covered and surveys relating to these are currently open.

The deadline for completion is 22 January. Full details are available at www.rcn.org.uk/con-8216

Moving on? Be sure to let us know

Did you move house or job in 2016? Are you planning to this year? If so, please remember to update your RCN details.

To ensure the College can deliver the best service to you, and as a statutory requirement as a trade union, it is vital the RCN has accurate and up to date addresses and contact details.

Council approves equality strategy

RCN Council has approved a strategy that sets priorities for promoting inclusion and tackling inequality over the next three years. There is a focus on individuals who may encounter multiple forms of discrimination – for example, black and minority ethnic women facing sexism at work compounded by racism. The strategy says: "It is hard to imagine a future for nursing that does not contain clear commitment and action towards equality, inclusion and human rights."

Delayed discharge: x needed

A lack of social care is forcing many patients to stay in hospital longer than necessary, according to the RCN. Figures from the Labour Party show delayed discharges cost the NHS nearly £500m a year. RCN Chief Executive Janet Davies said: "Far too many older patients are forced to stay in hospital because of insufficient social care. The health service cannot continue delivering the same care in a different era – it needs to develop new solutions for the new challenges ahead."



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CBE recognises 'tireless support'

RCN President Cecilia Anim has been awarded a CBE in the Queen's new year's honours. The award was made in recognition of her work for the RCN, as a nurse specialist in sexual health and as a leader in her community.

RCN General Secretary Janet Davies said: "Cecilia is a role model and an inspiration to many working in the NHS. She has worked tirelessly to support RCN members for more than three decades. She embodies the best of nursing. This honour is a wonderful and very welcome recognition of everything she has done for the nursing profession."

RCN Fellow Elizabeth Anionwu, Emeritus Professor of Nursing at the University of West London, was made a dame in the new year's honours.

'Catastrophic' recruitment crisis looms for the NHS

The Government is gambling with the future of the nursing workforce, the RCN has warned



A reported fall in the number of applicants for nursing degrees, combined with the potential effects of Brexit on the health care workforce, could make NHS services unsustainable, the RCN has warned.

Last month The Times reported applications for nursing, midwifery and allied health courses for 2017 were down 20% compared with the previous year. Nursing students in England will now have to take out tuition-fee loans after the Government abolished the bursary, and the RCN has previously warned this could have an impact on the number of students applying for nursing degrees.

RCN Chief Executive Janet Davies said: "We have consistently raised concerns with the Government that their decision to charge fees to nursing students in England and replace NHS bursaries with student loans would result in this drop.

"Despite 100 years' of nursing knowledge and expertise, our advice fell on deaf ears.

The Government went ahead in gambling on the future of the nursing workforce."

Janet added that uncertainty around the right for EU nurses to remain in the UK following Brexit risked making the existing workforce crisis even worse.

4 NEWS

Responding to requests to hasten death

The RCN has highlighted the need for compassionate and expert end of life care in updated guidance on dealing with requests to hasten death.

level of pain. Nurses should feel

The guidance says that sometimes patients talk about ending their lives as another way of expressing concerns about their condition or

Blood money

Some former employees of NHS Blood and Transplant may have been underpaid. Members who worked for the organisation between 2010 and 2016 but have now left are urged to email hrdirect@nhsbt.nhs.uk with their details and employment dates to see whether they are eligible for any reimbursement. Unsocial hours payments during annual leave, as agreed under Agenda for Change, have been calculated incorrectly for some former staff.

Everything you need to know about Congress...

Name a winner and claim your prize

It's easier than ever to make nominations for this year's RCN representative and V W X G H Q W L Q I R U P D W L R Q R Isuffinding EdaleG. Members who nominate a winner will receive £100 and those who propose a commendee will receive £50. The deadline for submissions is 28 February.

But you only have until 24 January to nominate people for RCN fellowships – awarded to those who have dedicated themselves to nursing and health care – and for the RCN award of merit. Visit www.rcn.org.uk/get-involved/rcn-awards for details.

FGM: new guidance

New guidance from the RCN will help members working in travel health and sexual health services address issues surrounding Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). It has been produced following advances in understanding and updated legislation. The RCN has also developed new pathways that can be used as quick reference tools and are intended to guide the development of local services.

Download Female Genital Mutilation: RCN Guidance for Travel Health Services and Female Genital Mutilation: RCN Guidance for Sexual Health Care from www.rcn.org.uk/publications



Vera Cook
RCN steward, BMI Healthcare

I was so annoyed by what was happening in my workplace in the 1980s that I became a steward – and I've been one ever since. We were facing the introduction of clinical grading. Individual letters were sent to staff and they were told to agree to the new terms or lose their jobs. I knew I had to stop moaning and get out there and do something. In theatres we had more than 120 years of enrolled nurse experience behind us yet we were being offered C-grade posts. We got together and signed a petition, and the surgeons supported us. We threatened mass resignations too. By standing up for ourselves we got the E grade we deserved.

Fast-forward 28 years and I'm still here supporting members. I'm now working in the independent sector. The RCN is the only union recognised in my workplace and some staff think we're not relevant en-peakM(enme.rted us. We threatened mass)Tj E

“ Immediate action is now required



8 FEATURES

For RCN member Ann*, domestic abuse began in childhood. Her mother would abuse her, her father and her sister physically and psychologically. She was made to feel that it was her fault, that she was being hit or screamed at because of something she'd done or hadn't done. She became shy, withdrawn and lonely.

At the time, Ann didn't realise what she was experiencing was domestic abuse and just viewed it as the way things were, an outlook that continued into an abusive marriage (read more of Ann's story opposite).

As Ann's experience illustrates, domestic abuse covers far more than physical violence – it can be

in public, a shadow of themselves. “In the minds of victims, fading into the background of society keeps them safe from difficult questions they struggle to answer,” she explains.

Often, health care workers are the only people they continue to engage with, which makes the role of nursing staff in recognising and supporting victims all the more important. “People generally respect and trust health care staff, and feel as if they can be relied upon for confidentiality,” says Amanda. “So just by being nurses we’ve already overcome some of the barriers to disclosure.”

RCN resources

The RCN has recognised this crucial role that nursing staff can play, recently launching a set of online resources relating to domestic abuse. They are designed to assist nurses and midwives in supporting their patients, but they also recognise that health care workers may themselves be victims of domestic abuse. They include key indicators for identifying cases, information about ways to seek help and tips for staying safe online.

As Carmel Bagness, the RCN’s Professional Lead for Midwifery and Women’s Health, explains, much of the information was already out there but it needed grouping together.

“We’ve put together a series of links to resources that already exist across the UK. It’s a comprehensive signposting resource which will be regularly reviewed. Every nurse and midwife should be thinking about domestic abuse wherever they’re working, as in every area you’ll come across patients or colleagues who have been affected.”

As well as providing support for victims and nursing staff, the resources also cover domestic abuse from the perspective of those who carry it out.

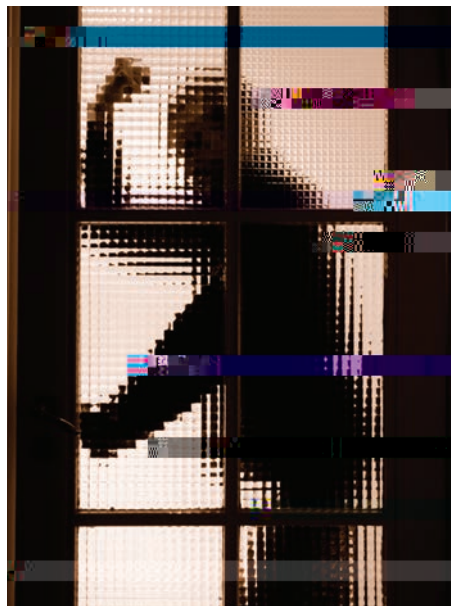
“It’s important that we recognise nurses and midwives will sometimes also be the perpetrators of domestic abuse,” says Carmel. “This presents a challenge for the RCN because we need to think about how we can support these members as well,

which involves understanding why they might be responsible and directing them to the appropriate programmes.”

Expert panel

The resources were compiled by a panel of experts, including RCN members and staff. Amanda – RCN Nurse of the Year 2015 – was invited to join the group after she proposed a resolution at last year’s RCN Congress calling for mandatory domestic abuse awareness training for all health care workers. “As nurses, the RCN is our trusted place so having the resources on the RCN website means they carry a lot of weight,” she explains. “It also means we’re able to tap into thousands of members, as well as the general public, to raise awareness.”

“Signposting is key,” she adds. “You can start a conversation with a victim, but on average it takes five interventions before someone engages with support agencies. So the resources are there for when people feel ready to use them.”



If you need help...

As an RCN member you can get free, confidential support and assistance to help you deal with any challenging emotional issues you may face. To make an appointment with the RCN counselling service, call 0345 772 6100.

Nursing associates: FAQs

What are nursing associates and how will they fit into the health care team? Will they be regulated and can they join the RCN? Tom Metcalf checks the facts

What is a nursing associate?

The nursing associate is a new health care role the Department of Health has introduced in England. The role is designed to bridge the gap between health care assistants (HCAs) and registered nurses.

Why has this new role been created?

Health Education England (HEE) says the creation of an additional nursing support role will have several benefits, including:

- providing a route into nursing and a career ladder for the health care support workforce
- enhancing the quality of

Animals play a huge role in many lives, and the evidence is growing that they can have major health alike. Whether it is a dog helping to guide a person who is blind or a cat keeping an older person company, there are countless ways in which animals can help to boost wellbeing and improve lives.

Amanda Cheesley, RCN Lead for Long Term Conditions and End of Life Care, wanted to know how much the health service asked members to share their thought about the health service becoming more animal-friendly.

Hundreds responded and members' enthusiasm was clear: 90% felt animals could improve the health of people with mental health problems; 82% felt dogs in particular encouraged patients to be more physically active; and almost 60% said just the presence of animals seemed to speed physical recovery.

Amanda says: "A positive mental outlook often makes all the difference in health care and animals can help to boost a patient's mood in many ways. They provide companionship, help patients to regain their independence and provide a kind of support that people often can't."

'Even alpacas'

Survey respondents agreed. One who works in a care home said "the joy is palpable" when dogs visit, adding that "ducks, rabbits,

goats and even alpacas" had been brought in for residents to stroke and pet.

Members reported a pet presence in many different settings, not just care homes. Hospices, intensive care, neurology, children's wards and mental health were among those mentioned. A palliative care nurse commented: "We have a resident cat and he brings much peace and serenity to our patients. He calms them down, they talk to him and he gives them comfort."

A nurse in outpatients said: "I worked with a young man with it hard to socialise. He found
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Jenny* was relieved to be offered a new job. She'd accepted dismissal from her role as a prison nurse because she knew her disability made it unrealistic for her to continue in that job. She maintained a positive outlook and looked forward to a new start as an NHS 111 call adviser.

"This new job was completely different from my former role," she says. "I have osteoarthritis, which made walking around a huge prison complex extremely challenging. But walking around a room, which is all my new job physically called for, didn't concern me."

Jenny was expected to attend a training course before starting her new job and she had happily gone along. However, two hours in, her trainer told her that her

14 FORUM FOCUS

Working with members, sharing good practice and representing her profession nationally are just some of the things that Jess Davidson is looking forward to as Chair of the recently merged Forensic Nursing and Nursing in Criminal Justice Settings forums.

The new forum, Nursing in Justice and Forensic Health Care, will support members working in police custody care, sexual assault services, prisons, immigration and detention centres, secure hospitals and other similar settings.

Jess, a senior clinical forensic charge nurse for NHS Lothian, said: "We want more forum members to contribute what they

think are the key issues in this area of nursing so that we can

New look for key infusion resource

The RCN Standards for Infusion Therapy is a key reference document in the delivery of nursing care for patients receiving this type of treatment. Infusion therapies support a wide range of health care, from blood transfusions to pain relief, and many people will receive one or more of these in their lifetime.

The RCN resource has recently been revised. The updated edition includes a new section on service development, therapy and the continued development of outpatient/home parenteral antimicrobial therapy services. Its aim is to support care and clinical management to improve patients' experience of infusion therapies.

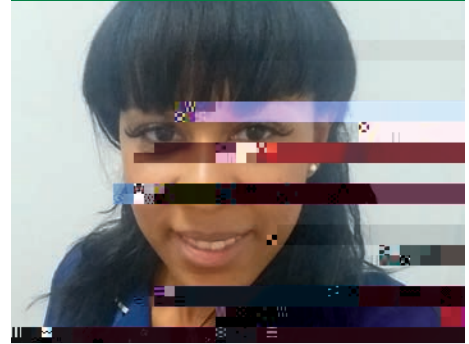
To mark the publication of the revised standards, a special masterclass exploring the planning and delivery of infusion therapy across the health service was held at the RCN's London headquarters last month.

Members and other staff from both hospital and community settings heard from Professor Dame Donna Kinnair, RCN Director of Nursing, Policy and Practice, as well as Rose Gallagher, Head of Standards, Knowledge and Innovation, and Amanda Cheesley, Professional Lead for Long-term Conditions and End of Life Care.

Rose said: "The event brought together to explore the changing face of infusion therapy and its impact on patient care." She added: "Infusion therapy is evolving the very latest in knowledge and practice. We hope that it will be used far and wide to improve delivery of care and patient experience."

To read and download the new standards visit <http://tinyurl.com/hgrrejf>

THE VIEW FROM HERE



Ismalia de Sousa
Clinical nurse specialist

Setting standards

Matt Butler, the new Chair of the RCN eHealth Forum, is the member representative on the Professional Record Standards Body (PRSB) advisory board. The PRSB aims to ensure care records in the health and social care system follow a widely agreed set of quality standards. Set up in 2013, the organisation aims to create an electronically transferrable patient record that is up to date and accessible to all those responsible for care.

Recognising that nurses should play standards they work to, the PRSB is keen to receive advice from nursing experts. To that end, the RCN has been heavily involved in the process.

April fertility event

If you are a nurse, midwife or health care assistant working in women's health services and wider reproductive health care, the RCN Fertility Nursing Conference in April will help Topics including female genital mutilation and transgender fertility changes will be covered, and there will be an update on legal issues and fertility preservation guidelines.

Carmel Bagness, RCN Professional Lead for Midwifery and Women's Health, said:

"This conference will give updates on UHJXODWRU\ DGYDQFHV ZLWKLQ WKH & HOG RI D U W Reproductive technologies and will also count towards CPD for revalidation."

To book visit www.rcn.org.uk/fertility17

16 EVENTS

The RCN Education Forum is hosting a conference exploring the future of nursing education and practice in the UK. The event is designed to support all health care educators from around the UK operating in clinical and professional settings.

Highlights include a keynote presentation by Professor Dame Jill Macleod Clark, Emeritus Professor at the Faculty of Health Sciences in the University of Southampton, on recalibrating education standards in nursing.

Professor Clark is leading on the Nursing and Midwifery Council's work to develop QHZ VWDQGDUGV RI SUR¿FLHQF\ IRU IXWXUH graduate registered nurses.

She will update delegates on the project, share the journey to date and outline her vision for the future of undergraduate nursing.

Delegates will also hear from two academics from Northumbria University. Dr Alison Steven, Reader in Health Professions Education, and Professor Pauline Pearson, Professor in Nursing, will discuss SLIPPS – Sharing Learning from Practice to Improve Patient Safety.

