



SPRING 2019

STOP THE STIGMA

KATT'S BREAKING DOWN
MENTAL HEALTH BARRIERS
ONE RUN AT A TIME P6

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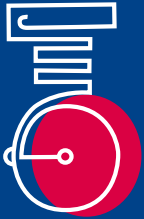
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Hello and welcome to everyone. I feel so honoured to have been elected as Student Member of RCN Council. It is an immense privilege to represent you all.

Let's face it, being a student nurse is hard. Our work is wonderful and meaningful but some days it can all feel like too much. If I can offer you anything, it's the reassurance that you're doing a great job. Even if you feel like you're running through mud at times, don't be discouraged, doing your best is good enough. Remember to be kind to yourself and reach out for support when you need it.

We're entering the nursing profession at a time of uncertainty and great change – we must empower ourselves to be part of the conversation, to get involved where we can and to keep positive in a sea of negativity.

The RCN Students Committee, along with RCN Council, is committed to improving the student experience and working conditions for nurses. Please get involved in our *#FundOurFuture* campaign and the RCN's safe OvO -btr

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If you've got a story to share, or there's a topic you'd like to see covered in a future issue, why not get in touch? Email studentsmagazine@rcn.org.uk

Did you know *RCN* is online? Read unmissable student stories, advice and guidance on the go, anywhere, at any time. And it's not just *RCN*, all our member magazines are there too – including *RCN B*. Visit rcn.org.uk/magazines

RCN D

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T G #F O F m m

#FundOurFuture is your campaign, led by students, for students to fight for better financial support in England. It has brought student members together and proved that you are a force to be reckoned with

removed the student bursary in England, which paid tuition fees in full. They said this would open up degree places and therefore attract more students, but there has actually been a 30% drop in the number of applications to study nursing in England since then.

That's because student nurses are unique, and you need more hours per year than an average student and between studies and placements, it isn't

supplement your income.

The result is that many of you the stress is detrimental to both your studies and your wellbeing. It's even causing some students to quit.

K registered nurse vacancies in England, the #FundOurFuture campaign is demanding that at how it supports nursing students in England.

We're calling for a minimum in nursing higher education in England.

Kelly Hitchcock from the RCN Students Committee says: "The time for action is now. Nursing students face unparalleled pressures, only

and without improved support the profession faces an uncertain future.

"The campaign has already made waves. More than 3,000 members contacted their MPs and, after we descended on Parliament to lobby MPs last year, Health Minister Stephen Hammond publicly committed is still a long way to go and we urge all our student members to join us in this campaign."

It's been a tough slog. It's been worth every step.

S  **c**

I've had depression in the past, for which I had medication and talking therapies, and I remember feeling totally isolated and alone. When I tried to talk to people around me, I was met with uncomfortable silence and distancing behaviour. So when asked what was wrong, I k ci `XfYgdcbXk jh` h`Ybcb!gdYJÜW "I've been unwell lately".

The climate around mental health needs to change so that student nurses feel they can ask for help when they need it. I never want anyone else to feel they have to work through a mental health problem alone.

O   **a**

I am now a third of the way through my unicorn run challenge and am so glad I'm doing it. The runs themselves give me a sense of achievement and the exercise helps me overcome feelings of anxiety.

My biggest achievement so far has been running the Cambridge Half Marathon in full unicorn costume in memory of Lucy de Oliviera.

Lucy was a student nurse who took \Yf`ck b`|Z`|b`&S%# Zc`ck j| U period of depression, which she felt she had to hide.

Her mother Liz believes Lucy felt she could not ask for help because of the stigma around mental health and how she would have been perceived as a nurse.



Y  **a**

Please remember to look after yourselves during your studies. Ask for help if you need it.

Don't worry about looking weak or vulnerable; chances are the people you talk to will have been through something similar or know someone who has. One thing this challenge has taught me is that so many people are touched by mental health issues, directly or indirectly.

5bXÜbU`nifYa Ya Vyf. ` You are not alone.

Follow that unicorn

You can follow Katt's journey on her Instagram page [@follow_that_unicorn_runner](#) and make donations to Mind to support her challenge at uk.virginmoneygiving.com/?Uñ i W

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It's been a tough slog. It's been worth every step

READ MORE ONLINE
[rcn.org.uk/
studentmag](http://rcn.org.uk/studentmag)

*Pictures by
Diana Hagues*

🕒 If you or someone you know is affected by mental health issues, contact the RCN's free counselling service: tinyurl.com/seeksupport Also visit rcn.org.uk/healthy-workplace

8 ROLE MODELS

the wider nursing profession.
Placements are the windows
students get into real life as a nurse.
Mentors should of course paint
a realistic picture and properly
prepare students for this, but they
should also get students excited and
highlight the many positives of this
rewarding profession.

K a a ca
a a

You learn skills to save lives every day as a student nurse. So if CPR training is mandatory, shouldn't learning how to respond to distress and suicidal thoughts be too?

Students Committee Chair

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I have seen this happen many times. A lot of trusts have stands in the exhibition area. What you've got and you never know, you may walk away with your dream job.

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For some students, this is the first time they've ever been to. It can be worth it and the Students Committee will be on hand to show you the ropes.

Y ca

My time as a student has been greatly enhanced by the relationships I've built at Congress. There's someone you've been following on Twitter for a while and you see them 'in real life', go and say hello.

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Congress isn't all serious. There are plenty of fun events which are a giggle. Fancy a morning

12 INNOVATION

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John-Marc Compérat won the RCN in Wales Student Nurse of the Year Award for a mindfulness resource he created for people with learning disabilities. He shares his inspiration

A few years ago, I was asked to create a health promotion tool for people with learning disabilities and their carers as part of an assignment. I never thought I would need to use these skills in health care where I mainly worked as a commercial sound engineer.

After talking to health care professionals and service users, I decided to develop an online audio tool to help make mindfulness accessible to people with learning disabilities.

M The mindfulness pack I developed includes four mindfulness exercises

that guide people through listening, observing, describing and doing things mindfully. They are all designed to help people take the time to stop and concentrate their thoughts and feelings in the here and now. They're introduced, described and delivered through audio description with accompanying written

14 INTERNATIONAL LEARNING

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Emily Asbridge had a unique insight into what it's like to be a student nurse in China, and witnessed the positive effects of traditional Chinese medicine

Emily Asbridge travelled 10,000 miles to Daqing, China, to take part in a nursing summer school

I was excited, but also tremendously nervous, with a lot of things going through my mind. Will the food be nice? What conditions will I be living in? Will I be able to make friends? How on earth am I supposed to squat over a toilet for two weeks?

Nothing, as it turned out to be the best two weeks of my life.

During my visit I spent time at a Chinese medical hospital where I observed traditional procedures used to treat a range of conditions from minor ailments to more serious health complications.

T a c

Acupuncture was being used widely within the hospital to treat the life-changing side effects of a stroke. One patient had experienced a stroke to the left side of his brain,



Emily (front centre) with her fellow nursing students in China

which meant he had right-sided weakness.

His treatment involved having acupuncture needles inserted into his scalp, face and tongue. I was told that because he started the

treatment at the early stages of his condition, he was beginning to regain some movement in his right arm.

The doctors were keen to show me further procedures which are common practice

My experience
really opened
my eyes to the
wider world

16 NEW ROLES

N  **a** **c a** **:**
a ' a **ab** **?**

Nursing associates registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council in England for the first time earlier this year. What's their role and how will they work with students?

W a ' a 
a c a (NA)?

It's a new nursing support role in England, with a focus on providing care. They bridge the gap between registered bi fgYgfFB gL UbX`YUh` WfY` UgggUblgfk 75gL

NAs work alongside the nursing team under the delegation of RNs or another registered health professional.

B 5gk cf_ `UWcggU` ÜYXgUbX settings in England including acute, mental health, Wa a i bJhzigVU` WfYz; D' practices and hospices.

I **a UK-**  **?**

Nursing associates are currently only registered to work in England.

Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have their own various training options available.

J JgJhrcn.org.uk/hcas`rc` ÜbX` out more.

H    

This group of staff are regulated by the Nursing and A JXk JZfm7ci bW`fBA 7E"

The standards for NAs and their training programmes are set by the NMC.

They work to the standards in the NMC Code. These set out what NAs should know and be able to do when they join the NMC register.

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NA a ?

How will nursing associates take the pressure off nurses?

When registering with the Nursing and Midwifery Council, the nursing associate must be able to demonstrate competence in around 60 procedures, potentially freeing up nurses' time to undertake more complex care.

The competencies include:

- » Measuring weight and height, calculating Body Mass Index and recognising healthy ranges and clinically significant low/high ranges

- » Undertaking vital signs, ECG recording

- » Observing and recording pain levels and rest and sleep patterns



- » Taking, recording and interpreting vital signs including temperature, respiration and blood pressure and monitoring

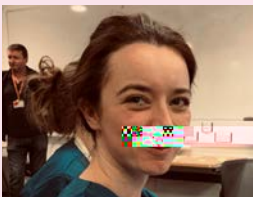
- » Observing and recording skin



Nursing associates bridge the gap

This graphic was first printed in Nursing Standard in March 2019. The related article can be read online: tinyurl.com/standardonline

A new route to nursing



Stacey McCabe, nursing associate and student nurse

I've worked in the health care environment for many years, but

when I trained to become an NA, I learned so much more about different aspects of nursing, including patient-centred care, medicine management, anatomy and physiology.

clinical skills. She could come to me to talk through any concerns or if she was unsure how to perform any tasks.

I've now taken the opportunity to top-up my foundation degree and am now in my second year of student nurse training.

second year of my nursing degree and hope to

18 YOUR COMMITTEE

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#hellomynameis Craig. It's a huge honour to be elected Chair of the RCN Students Committee. I'm looking forward to meeting and working with student nurses from across the UK and finding out more about the issues that matter to you. I can't wait to work with the rest of the committee to make your student experience the best it can possibly be. There are so many things to look forward to this year. Here's a taste of what the committee is up to and how you can get involved:

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The *#FundOurFuture* campaign is in full support for nursing students in England.

It will continue to support the campaign and join us in raising awareness and putting pressure on the Westminster government.

Read more about the campaign and how you can get involved.

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#FundOurFuture feeds into the wider RCN campaign for the right number of nursing staff with the right skills to provide safe and effective care in all settings.

It will help protect our supernumerary status. It will also improve patient care and working standards for us as the future nursing workforce.

Find out more about the campaign.

RCN a

How can we achieve equality of health outcomes when access to NHS services is not equal? This is the theme for the annual students' debate to listen to

speakers for both sides and have your say. More details to follow.

SIO c

We are also pleased to announce that last year we held our first mini-congress. The conference will include a mini-Congress with sessions around the themes of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Find out more about becoming an SIO at rcn.org.uk/sio

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The Students Committee will have a rep on the group reviewing the RCN membership and changing future workforce.



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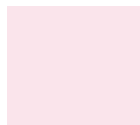
Craig Davidson (Chair)



Amy Fancourt



Lucy Mason



Vacant

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Laura Bird



Kelly Hitchcock



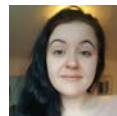
Harriet Bailey



Lyndsey Curtis-Dawson



Mark Lavery



Carolyn Brown



Sam Turner



Dawn Keating



Jess Sainsbury
(Vice Chair)



Jodie Ashford



Alice Duncan



Duncan Warren



Natalie Slater



Olatunde George

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The RCN Students Committee is led by students for students, and makes the student voice heard on the issues that matter to you. The committee reports directly to RCN Council – the RCN’s governing body, which provides leadership and direction for the organisation, helping to shape the future.



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students@rcn.org.uk

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ACTIVISTS