



be clearer how staff feedback is responded to. One of the guiding principles of the Act is to be open with staff and service users about decisions on staffing. The current wording that consideration is given could go further, making it clear within the framework that staff concerns will be recorded, responded to within an agreed timescale and will form part of service improvement planning. It would also be best practice for staff to receive feedback in written form. This approach would ensure that a record of staff feedback exists. This in turn will provide reassurance to staff and support a structured way to feed into improvement processes.

The RCN has published [Nursing Workforce Standards](#)

**Q6 What are the benefits in having a single staffing method framework for care homes in Scotland?**

The staffing method framework has the potential to assist when making decisions about how staffing is organised in a care home service. Along with the development of relevant workforce planning methodologies/tools.

**Q7 What are the barriers in having a single staffing method framework for care homes in Scotland?**

A single staffing method framework for all care homes is seeking to cover a wide variety of settings and a wide variety of staffing groups. This means that the framework will be high level but is unable to provide detailed quantitative information on staffing levels across all settings. While we think this is appropriate for an overarching framework such as the common staffing method within the NHS in Scotland which is underpinned by a range of methodologies and tools that are relevant to specific settings. As explained previously, we do not think that a single staffing method or tool should or can be developed that will be relevant for the different settings within the sector.

**Q8 Is there any further information you would like to tell us about the staffing method framework?**

With any staffing method it is important that resident/patient outcomes and quality of care are evaluated. The structure of care in care homes includes registered nurse staffing levels and skill mix as important characteristics; these in turn impact processes of care which then impact resident outcomes this may include use of antipsychotics, incidence of falls and pressure ulcers.

The need for any staffing method to consider the role of the Registered Nurse within care homes.

Role differentiation in care homes can become blurred. Without considering the unique role and contribution of team members, it can be difficult to see the influence of specific staff members (e.g., registered nurses) on the quality of care experienced by the residents. However, a review of the literature by Dellefield et al (2015)<sup>1</sup> demonstrated that most of the studies included in this review consistently reported that higher Registered Nurse staffing numbers and higher ratios of Registered Nurses in the nursing skill mix are related to better care home quality.

The presence of registered nurses in a care home, for residents with nursing needs, wellbeing. They are the core of the assessment process for continuing health care. As autonomous practitioners, their clinical skills are used to recognise and anticipate

unnecessary hospital admissions. Registered nurses are key to managing acute and chronic illness, making decisions around the management of long-term conditions, and delivering complex interventions in emergency or crisis situations. As the health needs of care home residents become more complex, nurses within care homes require specialist knowledge to manage the care of these residents and to liaise with, and engage, other health professionals in ensuring the needs of care home residents avoidable care.

The 2019 Act allows the Care Inspectorate to develop staffing methods which must include the use of staffing level tools designed to provide quantitative information relating to workload and quantitative or qualitative information relating to professional judgement in order to assist in determining the appropriate staffing levels for a care service.

For the avoidance of doubt, RCN Scotland is not of the view that the creation of a staffing method framework in itself meets the requirements of a staffing method as defined by the Act. We hope that the creation of this framework is the first step in the process of developing staffing methods and staffing models which provide the information required to make decisions around staffing.

As evidenced in our 2022 Nursing Workforce report<sup>2</sup>, there is a long-term trend of increasingly complex clinical need among people using social care services,