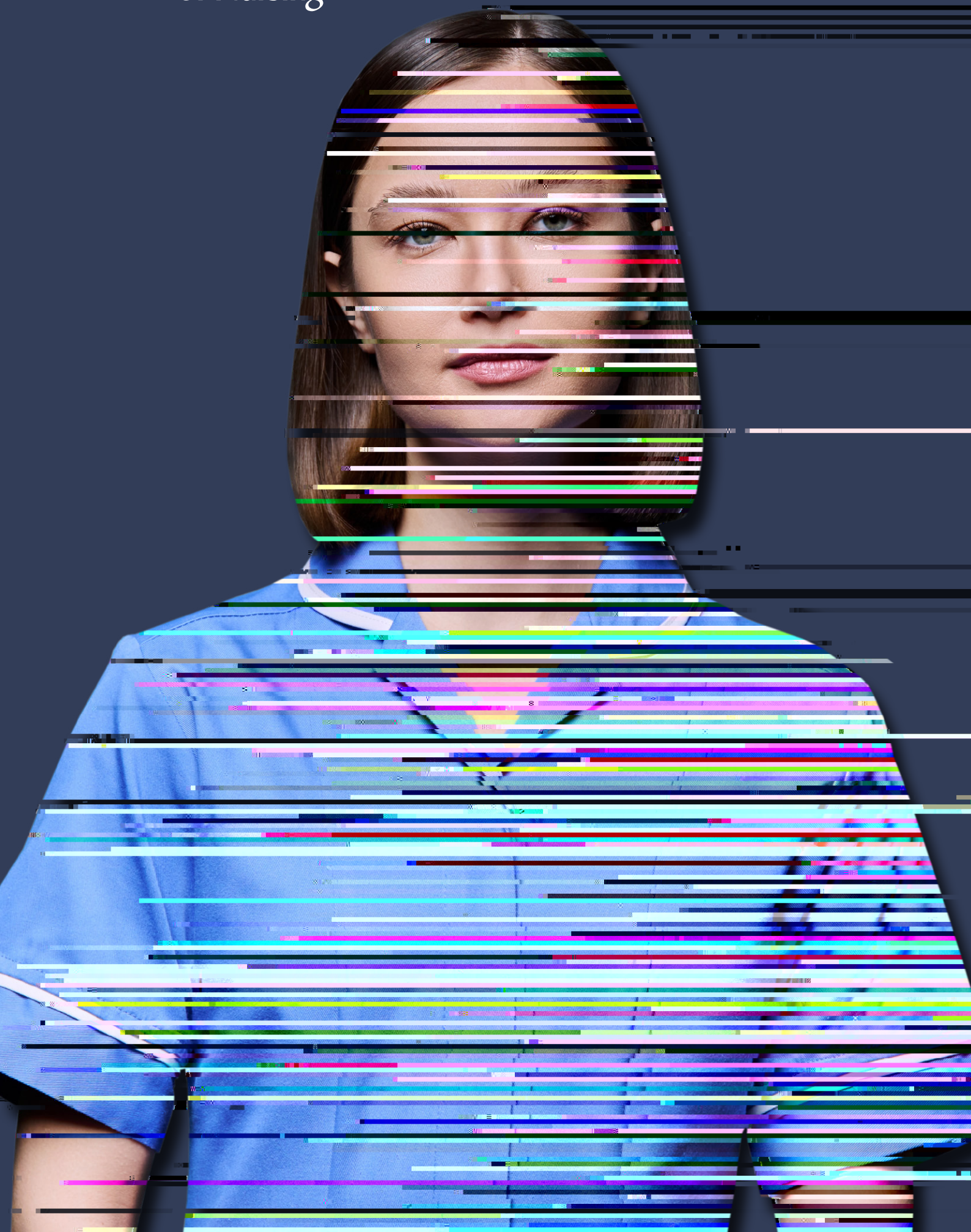


Royal College
of Nursing



IT TAKES A REMARKABLE PERSON
TO WORK IN NURSING.

OUR TOP 12 PRIORITIES

We want the UK government to:

1. Give all nursing staff a substantial pay rise and introduce automatic band 5 to 6 pay progression for NHS nurses.
2. Introduce safety-critical nurse-to-patient ratios in all care settings.
3. Provide legal protection for people raising concerns about unsafe staffing.
4. Fund mental health support for all nursing staff, provided by every employer.
5. Eradicate corridor care, and force reporting of it.
6. Commit to government-funded nursing degrees with a job guarantee for graduates.
7. Revoke legislation restricting the right to strike.
8. Protect the title 'nurse' in law.
9. End exploitation of health and social care workers and properly fund the sector.
10. Provide sufficient funding for continuing professional development.
11. End punitive immigration policies which affect internationally educated nursing staff.
12. Increase overseas aid spending to tackle global nursing shortages.

We want:

- Professionally and legally enforceable nurse-to-patient ratios, with a safety-critical maximum number of patients per registered nurse in every health care setting.
- Corridor care to be eradicated and mandatory public reporting of each incidence to be introduced.
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Better health for everyone

Health inequalities run deep in the UK. These are seen in lower life expectancy, increased risk of long-term health conditions, and sickness absence. Successive governments have promised to prioritise prevention and yet failed to deliver on this, perpetuating short-term planning and funding cycles. Good health is vital to supporting people in work and for the benefit of the wider economy. If people are unhealthy and impacted by poor health due to deep-rooted inequalities, they're less able to work, be productive and contribute to the economy.

Nursing staff don't just work in hospitals or health centres, they work in the heart of communities, often using innovative ways to promote good health, prevent illness and look after some of the most underserved groups. The way most of this work is funded in England through the local government public health grant is not enough. This grant has been cut by 24% in real terms since 2015/16, with cuts impacting people living in the most deprived parts of the country. Smaller budgets mean increased workloads and fewer resources for nursing staff working in health visiting and school nursing, sexual and reproductive health, smoking cessation, and drug and alcohol services to name a few.

The broken social care system can no longer go on. People are unable to get the care they desperately need in the communities they live. Patients are getting stuck in hospital, with nowhere to immediately go. Meanwhile nursing staff working in social care are paid amongst the lowest in the whole profession and nurses coming from overseas are being targeted by unethical recruitment practices leaving them in thousands of pounds of debt.

As the older population keeps growing, the next government must grasp the nettle and provide social care with the long-term funding settlement it desperately needs.

We want:

- Health prevention and health equity to be a priority across government and a national strategy for improving health and reducing health inequalities, including action to address the wider determinants of health.
- Secure, long-term funding for public health, based on assessment of population needs (current and future) and the resources (including workforce) required to improve population health and reduce health inequalities.
- Long-term funding for a sustainable social care workforce, with pay parity, and secure working conditions to provide stability for these lifeline services.
- An Older People's Commissioner for England and Scotland to advocate for the rights and issues of older people as we have in Wales and Northern Ireland.
- Legislation to ban all LGBT+ conversion therapy practices.

We want:

- Fully funded, accessible and effective mental health and wellbeing support, including occupational health services provided by every employer for all nursing staff working in the NHS and other health and social care settings.
- Violence and abuse towards nursing staff to be tackled, including racist and other discriminatory language or behaviour.
- Race equality strategies, including specific actions for public sector bodies and services, to transparently design out bias, racism, and wider discrimination for people with protected characteristics.
- An end to exploitation of health and social care workers, with a cross-departmental inquiry with ministerial oversight to identify levels of exploitation followed by robust action.
- Health and social care employers to comply with labour standards, with rogue employers and agencies held to account for non-compliance. The Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority should be granted powers to regulate the care sector, which should be properly funded.
- Findings of the cross-party Work and Pensions Committee report into the

Be a global health leader

The clock is ticking on a series of goals agreed by the United Nations. By 2030 the Sustainable Development Goals aim to increase health coverage, end the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and expand access to lifesaving vaccines – but the world is not on track to deliver. Progress is stalling and the UK has cut its overseas aid budget with serious consequences for the health of people in some of the poorest parts of the world, many of whom are facing the biggest impact from global warming and conflict.

The World Health Organization estimates that an additional 9 million nurses and midwives will be needed by 2030. Cuts to international development to support countries in other parts of the world have come at a time when investment in the global nursing workforce is critical in post-pandemic recovery and to achieve global health goals.

At the same time, the UK has become increasingly reliant on international recruitment. Thousands of nursing staff have been recruited from countries with critical workforce shortages to plug the gaps in the domestic workforce. That's despite organisations including the International Council of Nurses and World Health Organization making clear this should not be happening. In the context of global nursing shortages, the UK's reliance on international recruitment is both unethical and unsustainable.

The RCN is proud to represent members who come from across the world, who share a passion to provide the highest quality of care, but international recruitment must be done on an ethical and sustainable basis. The UK must do more to avoid exacerbating nursing shortages in low- and middle-income countries and ensure that migration is beneficial to both origin and destination countries.

Internationally educated nursing staff continue to make an invaluable contribution to the nursing profession here, but hostile immigration policies make the UK an increasingly unattractive place to live and work. There must be an end to divisive anti-migrant rules, including spiraling visa and settlement costs, limits on dependent visas and the no recourse to public funds condition that those without indefinite leave to remain are subject to. Our international colleagues must be valued and supported.

For people seeking safety in the UK, there must be a system that allows them to claim asylum in a way that upholds their human rights and is underpinned by compassion and fairness. Punitive policies aimed at deterring people from coming to the UK have a severe impact on the health, wellbeing and dignity of people seeking safety, and survivors of human trafficking.

We want:

- Commitment to tackle the global nursing workforce crisis and reinstatement of Official Development Assistance spending to 0.7% of Gross National Income in line with United Nations targets.
- An end to the reliance on overseas recruitment from countries with a shortage of nursing staff.
- Immigration policies to work for an internationally educated workforce, including ending the no recourse to public funds condition applied to those without indefinite leave to remain.
- An asylum system that upholds international human rights obligations and ensures access to health care.

STAY INFORMED, GET INVOLVED, BE ACTIVE

For more information, visit

