The Network’s first report to Council covered the period Sept–Dec 2013, including our plans for development of the Network,(January 2014). (2)

1. RCN Retired Members Network (The Network)
The network is member led and was established, by Council, in 2013.

In April 2013 the RCN Chief Executive & General Secretary, Dr Peter Carter, invited (1) eligible RCN members, to join the RCN’s Retired Members Network, (Appendix 1), with the purpose of;

“Keeping informed about issues and developments relevant to you, Represent the pensioners’ voice and influence the RCN’s strategic work, Helping the RCN to promote pensioners’ campaigns” and “Membership of the Network is open to any RCN member, aged 55 and above, and in receipt of a state or occupational pension”. (1)

2. National Pensioners Convention (NPC)
RCN Council agreed to affiliate to the NPC, “Proposal for RCN to become a member of the National Pensioners Convention” (25/3/12). (3)

Peter Carter’s invitation, (1) informed members of RCN affiliation to the NPC, and the RCN was seeking members of the network to represent the RCN’s retired members on the NPC National Council, stating;
“The NPC campaigns for the rights of retired people, and represents the interests of pensioners across a range of political, social and health issues” and “Through membership of the NPC we will be harnessing the talents of our retired members and you will help to ensure the pensioners’ voice and the voice of nursing is heard on a wide range of issues”. (1)

3. Elections for the RCN Retired Members Network (4)
The Network elections were held last Summer, with a very healthy 36.3% turnout, with 13 candidates standing for office. (4) The election results were;

- Membership of the NPC National Executive Committee & National Council and leadership role in the Network Trevor Peel
- Membership of the NPC National Council and leadership role in the Network Cate Woolley-Brown, Jackie Burns, Kate Fitzsimmons, Dr Joyce Forge

4. National Pensioners Convention (NPC)
The NPC is a complex organisation, with limited resources, and a small staff team, the NPC is member led and governed. The NPC origins go back to the TUC Congress of 1978 with the first National Pensioners Convention held in 1979.

The NPC originates from a traditional trade union background, but is diversifying the membership and affiliates, with country, regional, and local groups, as well as individual members, representing 1.5 million pensioners, across the UK.

4.1 Structure of the NPC is best illustrated on the diagram below;
4.2 The **RCN Retired Members Network**, is represented on the right hand side of the diagram, with the RCN Retired Members Network as the “National Pensioner Organisation” with RCN Countries, English Regions & branches, then individual members.

4.3 The **NPC Biennial Delegate Conference** (BDC) convenes next year, 18-19 March 2015, the venue is Yarnfield Park Conference Centre, Stone Staffordshire.

4.4 **NPC Pensioners Parliament** met in Blackpool, 17–19 June, 2014. The RCN Retired Members Network attended, our Network report on the NPC Pensioners Parliament has been submitted for publication, (copies of the report are available on request). **Next year’s Pensioners’ Parliament Blackpool 16 – 18 June 2015.** (5)

4.5 **NPC National Regional and Branch**, geographical structures, are somewhat different from the RCN.

4.6 **NPC Regional groups.** A fee is required to join NPC Regional groups, both organisationally, and individually.

4.7 **NPC National Executive Committee** and **NPC National Council** (see section 5.7 & 5.8 below).

4.8 **NPC Working Parties.** The NPC works through a number of Working Parties,

4.8.1. **NPC Organisational Working Parties:**
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o **Finance** sets and monitors the annual budget, considers some of the organisation’s expenditure/income and fundraising possibilities.

o **Structure** mainly considers the NPC’s structure regarding its 18 regional groups, looks at issues like subscriptions, and how to promote individual membership of the NPC.

o **Women** consider all aspects of policy that affect older women (Jackie Burns & Cate Woolley-Brown are in process of joining).

o **Minority Elders** consider all aspects of policy that affect minority elders (Dr Joyce Forge is in process of joining).

o **Trade Union** reps from each affiliated trade union consider how best to promote the NPC and its work amongst those still at work Trevor Peel represents the RCN. There is an annual conference for Trade Union affiliates on 12 November 2014.

o **Pensioners’ Parliament** Committee, a standing committee that organises every aspect of the annual 3-day event. Next year the Pensioners’ Parliament will be held in Blackpool 16 – 18 June 2015.

4.8.2. **NPC Policy Working Parties**

o **Pensions and Income** consider all aspects of pensions, benefits, tax and other related matters.

o **Transport.** The group considers concessionary travel, community transport schemes and other related matters. The Annual transport Conference is on 18 September 2014.

o **Health** considers all aspects of the NHS. **Trevor Peel is a member**

o **Social Care** primarily concerned with legislation, such as the Care Act and dealing with all aspects of social care.

5. **Summary of Network activities and member communication.**

5.1 **Communications** is our Number One Priority, and this was made absolutely clear to us, by our Member Accountability meeting, at RCN Congress, on 16 June 2014, where Members clearly wanted this as a top priority and to see improvements. We want to be open and transparent, sharing information and getting members involved.

**Communications**, with RCN colleagues has been face to face, telephone or email including the following;

RCN CEO & General Secretary, Chair of RCN Council, RCN Diversity lead, RCN Direct   RCN Older People’s Forum lead, RCN Communications Director, RCN MSS RCN Parliamentary Team, RCN Publishing, RCN Branches, RCN Policy Team,
RCN National and English Regional Board Directors, RCN Governance Support Team, RCN Marketing & Business Development.

5.3 **Results of the Network election's**, were published on the RCN website in September 2013, and also in RCN Bulletin.

5.4 **Teleconferences**, two teleconferences have been held for network leaders, on 25 September 2013 & 11 July 2014. (Notes of these are available on request). (6, 7)

5.5 **RCN Bulletin**, a Network Report was published in RCN Bulletin (December 2013), with a photograph of the Network leaders, and NPC General Secretary, Dot Gibson.

5.6 **An RCN Development Day for Network leaders**, was held on 5 February 2014 (Notes are available on request) (8)

5.7 **NPC National Council Meetings** (meets twice yearly) 17 October 2013 & 25 February 2014. (the date for October 2014, is not yet announced). The agenda and outcomes of meetings are reported in Network Updates and, to a lesser degree, on the RCN Network webpage (Notes of the meetings are available). (9, 10)

5.8 **NPC National Executive Committee Meetings** held six times a year, in 2013 on 19 November and in 2014 on 21 January, 18 March, 20 May, 15 July and scheduled for 16 September and 18 November. The agenda and outcomes of meetings are reported in Network Updates and, to a lesser degree, on RCN Network webpage (Notes of the meetings are available) (11, 12, 13, 14, 15)

5.9 **NPC Pensioners Parliament, Blackpool**, 17–19 June 2014. The Network report on NPC Pensioners Parliament has been submitted for publication (a copy of the report is available on request). (5) The 2015 Pensioners’ Parliament will be held in Blackpool 16 – 18 June 2015.

5.10 **Network Updates 2013/14.** Network Update, Numbers 1 - 24 have been sent to a limited circulation, (copies of Network Updates, Numbers 1 24, are available on request). (16) Issues covered include (in no particular order and this is not an exhaustive list);
- Ageism
- Pensioners positive contribution to the economy & society
- UK State Pension – current & future provision (significant changes)
- Proposals for additional pension top up, single tier pension etc.
- State Pensions paid outside of the UK
- Universal Pensioner benefits - current & future provision (bus pass, winter fuel allowance, free TV licences for over 75’s, & free prescriptions)
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- Means tested benefits, current & future provision
- Occupational Pensions current & future provision
- Dignity Code
- Dignity Day 2014
- Creation of an Older People’s Commissioner for England
- UN Older People's Day & European Day of Older People on 1 October 2014.
- Social care changes affecting older people
- Health changes affecting older people
- Impact of devolution on health & social care in the four countries of the UK
- Integration of health & social care
- Implications for pensioners of tax & National Insurance changes
- care.data and HSCIC – the issue of confidentiality
- TTIP
- Carers
- NHS Fellowships & local health fellowships
- Excess winter deaths amongst older people
- Party political manifestos for the 2015 General Election
- Transport issues
- Some of the organisations, issues and people that we are/have worked with including (for further information see Network Updates Numbers 1 – 24):
  - Age UK
  - Patients Association
  - Independent Age
  - House of Commons Library
  - Care & Support Alliance
  - RCGP
  - Alzheimer’s Society
  - Age Sector Platform Northern Ireland
  - Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament
  - Frances O’Grady, TUC General Secretary
  - Rodney Bickerstaffe
  - Andy Burnham, MP
  - Greg McClymont, MP Shadow Pensions Minister
  - Rachel Reeves, MP, Shadow DWP
  - Steve Webb MP, Pensions Minister
  - Norman Lamb, MP Care Minister
  - Paul Burstow, MP, former Care Minister
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- Ethnic minority elders
- Lord Willis
- Susan Kramer, Transport Minister

- Considered a number of reports from all three major political parties, and think tanks, about older people and pensioners
- Fear of crime
- Loneliness

5.11 **RCN Discussion Zone (RCN DZ)** postings regarding the *Network* appear on DZ.

5.12 **RCN website** The RCN Retired Members have a *Network* page is updated.

5.13 **Contact with individual Network members** Trevor Peel has been in contact with individual *Network* members, via his email address, since the *Network* report was published in the December 2013 issue of *RCN Bulletin*. Members have also contacted the Network since the first “bulk email” of 16 May 2014 and each member had a reply. (17)

5.14 **Geographical Network links** Cate Woolley-Brown has taken the lead, with a long established *Network* Northern Region Group. *Network* Members have already volunteered, from around the UK, with *Network* “link members” in Yorkshire & Humber, Wales and in *Network* Branch “link members” in Newcastle, Guernsey & Jersey.

In the North West, the event planned has been “put on hold” as agreed at the meeting with Michael Brown, on 3 April, when the *Network* “put on hold” all further development until after the Council meeting on 24 July.

5.15 **RCN Congress Liverpool, 14-19 June 2014**, the *Network* had a useful Accountability meeting, with some thirty Members, on 16 June at Congress. A *Network* report has been submitted for our second “bulk email” to member’s (a copy is available on request). (18)

Two *Network* documents were circulated to members who attended. (A copy is available on request). (19, 20)

Issues relating to RCN retired members were discussed in the RCN Council Report session (on Tuesday) at the AGM (on Wednesday) and also informally.

The *Network* has produced a report on RCN Congress for the NPC. (A copy of the *Network* Update report, on RCN Congress, is available on request). (21)

6. **Policy development.** Two examples;

6.1. **Creation of an Older People’s Commissioner for England**

The *Network* supports the Creation of an Older People’s Commissioner for England, like our fellow citizens in Northern Ireland and Wales, who have established their own Older People’s Commissioner for Northern Ireland and Wales respectively.
Scotland’s proposals for an Older People’s Commissioner are as yet unclear. The Network is working closely with the RCN Older Peoples Professional Lead on this issue.

6.2. 1st October 2014 United Nations Older People's Day & European Day of Older People
The Network is working with the RCN Older People’s Professional Lead on taking forward the UN Older People’s Day & European Day of Older People on 1 October 2014.

7. Membership.
7.1. Retain RCN members on “retirement”. Recruiting members to the Network (or actively reminding RCN members, to retain their membership at the payment plan of their choice and opting into the Network). This is a priority for the Network.

7.2. Membership. We currently have over 8000 RCN members in the retired membership category and over 775 in the RCN Retired Members Network source RCN Council paper (2012) and ERS Report (2013) and a known number of members over the age of 60. (3 4)

7.3. Report on retired members in UK Trade Unions (NPC Trade Union Working Party)
The "NPC RMA Survey 2014," seeks to assist trade unions on good practice regarding retired members and involvement in their Trade Unions, asking ten key questions for Trade Unions to answer;

1. Is there a Recognised Retired section of the Trade Union?
2. How many retired members in the Trade Union?
3. What is the Fee to join?
4. Are retired members in work branches?
5. Can retired members hold positions in the Trade Union?
6. Can retired members put resolutions to the National Union Conference?
7. How is the retired section governed?
8. Is there a national conference for retired members?
9. What funding does the retired members section receive?
10. Do retired members have their own newsletter /magazine?

7.3.1. Retired membership of other Trade Unions
The survey gave the number of retired Trade Union members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade Union</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNISON</td>
<td>163,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNITE</td>
<td>240,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BECTU</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Conclusion
This report gives an overview and only a “flavour” of some of the activities of the RCN Retired Members Network, which is a new and developing network within the RCN, and describes our developing relationship, and work, with the NPC and other organisations.

9. The Future
9.1 The leadership of the RCN Retired Members Network believes that RCN Retired Members have a huge amount to offer the RCN; this potential has not been developed until recently, with the welcome development, by Council, of the RCN Retired Members Network.

9.2 As the membership figures show, other Trade Unions (see 7.3 above), some in competition with the RCN, have started to develop this potential and now, the RCN is catching up.

9.3 How many members have we lost over the years because we were not retaining and organising our retired members?
9.4 The leadership of the RCN Retired Members Network are in favour of further development and strengthening of the RCN Retired members Network in the following ways;

a. In cooperation with Board colleagues at Country and English Regional level we seek to have an RCN Branch Network “link member/s” for the RCN Retired Members Network (these colleagues would facilitate with RCN Branch colleagues the involvement of RCN Retired Members in the work of the College locally).

b. In cooperation with Board colleagues at Country and English Regional level we seek to have an RCN Retired Members Network Country/ Regional “link members in each of the 3 countries and the 9 English Regions, (these colleagues would facilitate with RCN Branch and Board colleagues, the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Union</th>
<th>Membership</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CWU</td>
<td>17,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NASUWT</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUT</td>
<td>27,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCS</td>
<td>8,968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROSPECT</td>
<td>22,784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMT</td>
<td>2,000 (estimate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSSA</td>
<td>800 (estimate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCU</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USDAW</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
involvement of RCN Retired Members in the work of the College at Country/English Regional level).

c. The leadership of the RCN Retired Members Network seek, in cooperation with “link members” colleagues from Country and English Regional level, and with UK colleagues, to develop and strengthen the communications between retired RCN members and the NPC.

d. Seek to have an Annual RCN Retired Members Network accountability event at RCN Congress, to improve accountability of the Network leadership to members, and building on this year’s event.

e. Actively seek to retain RCN members at the point in their career when they leave membership.

Cate Woolley-Brown, Jackie Burns, Dr Joyce Forge, Kate Fitzsimmons Trevor Peel

RCN Retired Members Network
July 2014

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References
1. Dr Peter Carter, invitation to join the RCN’s Retired Members Network, (April 2013)
3. Proposal for RCN to become a member of the National Pensioners Convention
RCN Council paper (25/3/12)
4. ERS report on results of RCN Retired Members Network election (16 September 2013)
5. RCN Retired Members Network report on the NPC Pensioners Parliament 2014 (June 2014)
6. Note of first teleconference for network leaders (25 September 2013)
7. Second Teleconference for network leaders (11 July 2014)
8. Note of RCN Development Day for Network leaders, (5 February 2014)
9. NPC National Council Meeting (17 October 2013)
10. NPC National Council Meeting (25 February 2014)
11. NPC National Executive Committee (19 November 2013)
12. NPC National Executive Committee (21 January 2014)
13. NPC National Executive Committee (18 March 2014)
14. NPC National Executive Committee (20 May 2014)
15. NPC National Executive Committee (15 July 2014)
16. RCN Retired Members Network Updates 2013/14, Numbers 1 - 24 (2013/14)
17. RCN Retired Members Network first “bulk email” with invitation to Network meeting at RCN Congress (16 May 2014)
18. RCN Retired Members Network second “bulk email” with report from accountability meeting at Congress and report from NPC Pensioners Parliament (submitted 3 July 2014)
19. RCN Retired Members Network Report to the accountability meeting at Congress and plans for NPC Pensioners Parliament (June 2014)
20. RCN Retired Members Network Report with information from the NPC RMA Survey 2014, on good practice regarding retired members and Trade Unions, (June 2014)
21. RCN Retired Members Network Report Network report on RCN Congress for the NPC (June 2014)

Appendix 1; Message from the RCN General Secretary & Chief Executive, Peter Carter 2/4/13 Retired Members Network

Dear Trevor

The National Pensioners Convention
The RCN has joined the National Pensioners Convention (NPC). The NPC campaigns for the rights of retired people, and represents the interests of pensioners across a range of political, social and health issues. Through membership of the NPC we will be harnessing the talents of our retired members and you will help to ensure the pensioners’ voice and the voice of nursing is heard on a wide range of issues.

We would like to invite you to join the RCN’s Retired Members Network.

- keep informed about issues and developments relevant to you, represent the pensioners’ voice and influence the RCN’s strategic work,
- help the RCN to promote pensioners’ campaigns,
- ensure the voice of nursing is heard on a wide range of issues.

We will also be seeking members of the network to represent the RCN’s retired members on the National Council later this year – more information will be on our website at www.rcn.org.uk/elections from 1 August 2013.

Who is eligible? The Network is open to anyone aged 55 and above in receipt of a
state or occupational pension

**How to join** To join the Network, visit [www.rcn.org.uk/myrcn](http://www.rcn.org.uk/myrcn) and tick the box for ‘Retired Members Network’ in the ‘My forums and activities’ page. You can also call RCN Direct on 0345 772 6100. For further information on the NPC visit [www.npcuk.org](http://www.npcuk.org).

Yours sincerely

**Dr Peter Carter, Chief Executive & General Secretary, RCN**