NEWS DIGEST

Malawi project

The RCN hosted an event last month, organised by Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), which brought together nursing representatives from Malawi and the UK to share learning and build solidarity. Joylet Genda, VSO Malawi Project Manager (pictured), updated delegates on a VSO-led project aimed at working with Malawian health services to increase the professional skills and nationwide coverage of its staff. The RCN, alongside other organisations, is involved in the project.

Funds for NI nurses

Registered nurses in Northern Ireland can apply for support from two RCN Foundation funds to help them undertake a course, a project or research. Details of the Rae Bequest Training Fund and the Marcia Mackie Fund are available at www.rcnfoundation.org.uk and applications, for amounts between £200 and £1,000, must be received by 6 February.

Care home focus

Researchers from York University are using funding from the RCN Foundation to scope the professional development needs of nursing staff in care homes. Care homes now provide more beds than the NHS, but there is little information on staff retention, turnover, continuing professional development or job satisfaction. Read the research blog at www.rcnfoundation.org.uk

LGBT champions

RCN activists Rachael Ridley (pictured) and Dominic Walsh have been named LGBT role models by the Health Service Journal for their work in promoting inclusion and leading by example. Glenn Turp, Director of the RCN Northern region, said of Rachael: “She tirelessly champions the interests of the trans community in every possible setting.”

Record figures

RCN membership has reached an all-time high of 425,942, with numbers rising in all member categories. RCN representatives and staff supported more than 23,000 members in the workplace last year and recovered £8.75 million in compensation. Chief Executive Dr Peter Carter said: “The more members we have, the louder and stronger our voice.”

Elections latest

This is your last chance to vote for your new President and Deputy President. Ballot papers were sent with your October issue of RCN Bulletin. Please return them by 4 November 2014, using the pre-paid envelope provided.

Voting has also opened in elections for some RCN boards. Vote via the RCN website or the email sent to you on 27 October. Nominations have reopened for other board and committee vacancies; please put yourself forward for these exciting opportunities.

Limited time offer

Don’t pay more than you need to for your gas and electricity. Use Member Energy, the energy switching service brought to you by RCNXtra.

Until 30 November you will receive a free Gourmet Society dining card when you switch your energy provider using Member Energy.

Visit www.rcn.org.uk/xtra for more details.

Find out more at www.rcn.org.uk/elections
A good job

The RCN Bulletin Jobs Fair is coming to Leeds on 11-12 November. As well as more than 40 exhibitors from the NHS, charities and agencies, there will be free expert careers advice to help you find the perfect job and free seminars on topics such as CV writing. The Jobs Fair takes place at New Dock Hall, Clarence Dock, a short distance from Leeds city centre.

www.rcnbulletinjobsfair.co.uk

Brain drain warning

The Government has been warned of a brain drain of newly registered nurses after RCN survey results showed that 64 per cent of nursing students are considering a career abroad. More than half of students surveyed said the Government’s decision on pay has made them think twice about a career in the NHS. The RCN said British-educated nurses were being treated as “disposable”.

Fee rise ‘a big blow’

The decision by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) to increase its annual registration fee by £20 to £120 has been described by the RCN as a big blow to nurses and midwives. “It means yet more pressure on their personal finances,” said RCN Chief Executive Dr Peter Carter. “The NMC’s move is deeply damaging to nursing morale, which is why the RCN totally opposes this increase.”

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Patient care is suffering as a result of understaffing and poor management

RCN members took to the streets to demand fair pay last month. In marches and rallies organised by the TUC that attracted up to 90,000 people, hundreds of nursing staff asked politicians to consider “What if nursing staff just said no?”

Many RCN demonstrators had travelled hundreds of miles to express their anger. Nursing staff of all ages and from all backgrounds loudly expressed their views and demanded to be heard. Gayle Williams, an activist from south Wales, said she felt she was part of something special. “We’re not asking for the world. Just fair pay for a fair day’s work,” she said.

The demonstrations took place as a new survey carried out by the RCN on behalf of 14 NHS trade unions revealed the full impact of understaffing on staff morale and patient care. The survey found that nearly two-thirds of NHS staff rely on supplementary earnings to support their salary.

Approximately a third rely on unsocial hours payments to maintain their standard of living and of those, more than seven in 10 said they could not afford to work unsocial hours if these payments were removed. The research also revealed nurses’ concerns that patient care is suffering as a result of understaffing and poor management.

“Nurses and other NHS workers are angry that they have been expected to plug the gaps in NHS funds, while trying to cope with the effects of understaffing,” said RCN Chief Executive Dr Peter Carter. “While the economy continues to grow, frontline NHS staff, who have carried the NHS through a chaotic reorganisation, are worse off than they were in 2010.”

Celebrity support: Russell Brand joins RCN members to demand fair pay for nursing staff

www.rcn.org.uk/whatif
Nursing staff key in limiting antimicrobial resistance

It’s European Antibiotics Awareness Day on 18 November and a new RCN position paper sets out the contribution of the nursing profession in reducing the risk of antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

The RCN believes a robust national strategy on infection prevention and control – something the UK currently lacks – is critical for reducing the risk of AMR and the strategy must withstand any future changes in government or to the NHS.

In its paper, the RCN recommends a greater focus on strengthening public health initiatives to support people to live well and avoid the need for antibiotics. It argues that more must be done to engage health care workers from across the professions, patients and the public in this major issue.

“AMR is increasingly recognised as one of the major health challenges of our age. This is a global, long-term threat,” said Rose Gallagher, RCN Adviser for Infection Prevention and Control.

“If we don’t get a grip on AMR, health care as we know it will change forever. We won’t be able to undertake many of the procedures we take for granted now because it will be impossible to protect people from infections.”

Rose said that nursing is 70 per cent of the health care workforce and therefore 70 per cent of the solution. “Nursing staff have a key role to play in limiting AMR through their leadership and skills supporting infection prevention, antibiotic stewardship, and public health,” she added.

One of the key recommendations is that all health commissioners should ensure they have access to adequate infection prevention advice and properly support the specialist IPC nurses working in their health care organisations.

Recognising the global nature of the AMR threat, the RCN also proposes that the UK should ensure it includes a nurse envoy in delegations to the World Health Organization to support nursing leaders in other countries.

RCN students help shape new Francis review

More than 35 nursing students met with Sir Robert Francis earlier this month to share their experiences of raising concerns and their views on the reporting culture in health services.

The event, hosted by the RCN, formed part of Sir Robert’s Freedom to Speak Up review, which he was asked to carry out following his report into events at Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust. The review is expected to result in recommendations to the Secretary of State for Health by the end of November.

“I have had the privilege of meeting a group of very fine nursing students who are a credit to their profession. I heard of some shocking experiences and yet some very good ideas about how we can make speaking up easier and safer to do,” said Sir Robert. “In this way all those who came have made a significant contribution to patient safety and the integrity of our health service.”

Students at the event made suggestions for how to improve conditions for those starting out in nursing. These included an independent person students can go to for confidential support and protection from bullying as a result of raising concerns.

The RCN, working with nursing students, will submit recommendations to Sir Robert’s review on their behalf.

Howard Catton, RCN Head of Policy, said: “We have heard about the issues and concerns which affect students specifically when they need to raise concerns, and we will ensure that their views are taken forward.”
Congress: help shape the agenda

It’s time to start thinking about RCN Congress 2015

Plans are already underway for next year’s RCN Congress and submitting entities have until 23 January to suggest topics for resolutions and matters for discussion.

Stuart McKenzie, the new Chair of RCN Congress, said: “It may still seem a long way off but I would encourage you to start thinking about agenda items as soon as possible.”

He added: “Congress really does put nursing in the spotlight and it is you, our members, who set the agenda.”

Agenda items can be submitted by RCN branches and forums, country and regional boards, the Students and Health Practitioner committees, and the UK Stewards, Learning Representative and Safety Representative committees. RCN Council may also submit items. Individual members who have good ideas for Congress items can email congressagenda@rcn.org.uk and they will be put in touch with their branch, forum committee or board.

The Congress Agenda Committee will consider each item and decide whether to recommend that Council should accept it onto the agenda. The committee makes its decision based on the suggested item’s relevance and interest to members; whether it will promote debate; whether it reflects the key concerns of members; and whether it will advance thinking and discussion.

Stuart said: “We are, as always, looking for items that will encourage great debate and which offer the potential to lead to groundbreaking work.”

New guidance on CPR decisions

RCN teams up to help clarify resuscitation process

The RCN, in partnership with the British Medical Association and the Resuscitation Council, has published revised guidance regarding decisions relating to cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

The new edition of Decisions Relating to Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation identifies key ethical and legal principles that should inform all CPR decisions.

RCN Chief Executive Dr Peter Carter said that situations involving attempts at resuscitation were difficult for all concerned. “What the new edition of the guidance makes clear is that with good, sensitive communication from staff, individuals can plan, make their wishes known, and understand the consequences of decisions around resuscitation attempts.”

Tips to prepare your home for winter

Every year during the winter months, the RCN’s approved provider of home insurance LV= sees a spike in the number of calls it receives for home damage claims. To limit the damage and prepare your home for winter here are some top tips from LV =:

- protect your pipes from freezing
- keep your gutters clear to prevent blocked drainpipes
- check the roof and replace broken or missing tiles
- get your boiler serviced and your central heating checked
- draw your curtains during the evening to deter burglars
- use a light timer if you go away overnight
- fit security lights that point to your door or window.

For more information and to get a home insurance quote from LV = visit www.rcn.org.uk/insurance

Read the guidance at www.rcn.org.uk/publications

Congress really does put nursing in the spotlight

There is a lot more information on the RCN website about submitting agenda items: www.rcn.org.uk/congress2015
**Feedback**

**Will Hardy**
RCN Parliamentary Affairs Manager, on political influencing

The party conference season is now over but it didn't pass without the RCN maximising the opportunity to influence at the highest level. This year, as in previous years, staff and representative members of the RCN attended the conferences of all three main political parties.

Our focus on securing you a fair pay deal was unwavering. Not only were we able to dispel the myths politicians commonly hold about NHS pay, but our one-on-one meetings and participation in fringe events allowed us to really press home the need to value the staff propping up the service at a time when financial pressures are threatening to cripple it.

Following the conferences, the NHS is now clearly the top priority politically and a key battleground ahead of the general election. We have put nurses and nursing at the heart of the debate and this was reflected in the various pledges relating to health. Now we must work hard to ensure whoever is elected next May honours their promises and is held to account. Our general election campaign will be a key part of making sure that happens, so keep a look out for further information about our Nursing Counts campaign over the coming months.

[www.rcn.org.uk/westminster](http://www.rcn.org.uk/westminster)

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**Hot topic**

**Do you think nursing staff are fairly represented in history books?**

Nicola McKay, a specialist nurse, thinks nursing staff are under-represented in history books. "Their contribution is not acknowledged to its full extent. But we will never really know because we weren't there. I have a sense nursing history is romanticised," she says.

Lesley Pallett, Workforce Health and Wellbeing Specialist Adviser, says that nurses are not always fairly represented in history books as they are shown as "angels", formidable women or heroines. "What is not always portrayed is the context in which these women were trying to work and the obstacles they faced when trying to move the safe and appropriate care of patients forward," she says.

"Apart from one or two individuals, nurses' contributions in other areas also appear to be played down, even if they did play an important role."

According to Felicia Cox, Lead Nurse in Pain Management, too much importance has been placed on the historical contributions of individual nurses. "More attention should be focused on long-term contributions," she says. "The Augustinian sisters at Hôtel-Dieu, founded in 651 in Paris, and the Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital in Kaiserwert, established in 1836 and where Florence Nightingale trained on two occasions, have both provided care delivery and education for nurses for centuries."

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**What you’ve been saying**

**Protest march**

Fantastic march, fantastic turn out and fantastic to be led out by both our General Secretary and President. Also big thanks to Russell Brand for his support and marching with us.

Andy Bassett-Scott, via Facebook

@theRCN great turn out today! Good to meet some fellow @RCNstudents too. Let’s hope today’s noise woke some people up.

Dominic Edward Simpson, via Twitter

Russell Brand wearing @theRCN tabard. Never thought I’d see that!

Dr Theresa Porrett, via Twitter

One day those caring for our society will be paid what they deserve #whatif

Emma Tate, via Twitter

**Bonus culture**

Nurses are not getting their cost of living increase because there isn't enough money apparently. But there is enough for £166 million in bonuses for NHS bosses. They get these bonuses for meeting targets which rely on frontline staff. I find this disgusting.

Danielle Levine, via Facebook

**NMC anger**

I am planning to take early retirement next year. Nursing is certainly not what it used to be. So angry that the NMC, despite knowing that we are yet again being refused a pay rise, has increased our professional registration fees yet again! Nursing will become an expensive career to remain in the rate things are going.

Sarah Rudman, via Facebook

**No increase in pay. But there is always an increase in NMC registration fee! Next year, it’s gonna be £120! Awful!**

Marian Gonzaga Tumamak, via Facebook

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**WRITE TO US:** CONTACT DETAILS ON PAGE 2
Saluting the past

Nurses from the Great War will never be forgotten

Nursing is undeniably tough. Emotionally and physically, the toll it takes can be huge, and the demands that staff face seem to multiply all the time.

At this time of year, however, it’s salutary to remember the hardships faced by nursing staff serving in our armed forces for whom the challenges of the job are often beyond compare. I have been privileged to hear first hand from many of them; and when, for example, I reflect on what it might be like to tend a badly injured colleague, in the open, while under fire, my imagination begins to fail me.

Going all the way back to Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole, nursing has played a noble part in the history of armed conflict, perhaps never more graphically than in the First World War. On the front line, in field units and in hospitals at home, our nursing forebears worked under massive pressure to bandage the wounded, comfort the dying and rehabilitate the terribly injured. The conditions in which battle raged – mud, damp, squalor – only added to the multiple challenges, with the rapid spread of infection a constant threat.

It’s easy to think of these nurses as remote, sepia-tinted ghosts from history; but as the exhibition currently running in the RCN Library and Heritage Centre reminds us, they were as real as you and me, with hopes and fears, families and friends.

The difference is the extraordinary circumstances in which they served. They, and their contemporary counterparts, deserve our utmost respect.

Dr Peter Carter
RCN Chief Executive

From the heart

Dan Warrender
Staff nurse

In acute mental health settings an estimated 20 per cent of inpatients are people with borderline personality disorder (BPD). This is despite expert opinion stating that admission holds little value. People with BPD present a chronic risk of self-harm and suicide. To treat these patients effectively, nursing staff must tolerate an element of risk and attempt to engage therapeutically.

Although a patient may express suicidal ideas, this doesn’t logically lead to suicide completion. However, the fear of litigation and investigations can restrain nursing staff. They may become risk-averse and this can hinder patient progress.

“Customer is always right” approach, forcing nurses to act against their instincts. In these cases tolerating risk is not neglect, but a necessary process which allows the patient to maintain a sense of control of their own behaviours and avoid becoming dependent on health professionals for their own safety.

Convince me

Everyone now is convinced we should stop unplanned admissions to hospital and this will save the NHS. We’re seeing new monies for novel solutions, but where’s the investment in core district nursing and long-term conditions nursing? Without a genuine push to change the way services are funded the community will remain forever the poor relation.

Neil Thompson, district nurse and RCN UK Safety Representatives Committee member

What I’ve been reading

I was fascinated to read Catherine Cookson’s last book, The Silent Lady. A compelling story about a woman who is dynamic and vivacious, yet suffers at the hand of a bullying husband who manages to destroy her psyche by unimaginable cruelty. The story unfolds as she is rescued by simple folk, who nurture her mental and physical health.

Zeba Arif, Deputy Chair, RCN Forensic Nursing Forum
Lest we forget

Nurses played a remarkable role in the First World War. An RCN exhibition commemorates their achievements. Lynne Pearce finds out more

When Britain declared war on Germany on 4 August 1914, thousands of women volunteered their services to the war effort, with nursing a popular choice. As part of the centenary, the RCN is remembering their contribution with a special exhibition in the Library and Heritage Centre at the RCN’s London headquarters until 31 March 2015.

“Front Line Nurses: British Nurses of the First World War has been curated by Christine Hallett, a member of the RCN History of Nursing Society (HoNS) steering committee, working with RCN staff.

“Searching the RCN’s archives and finding material that’s relevant to this period in history has been an interesting process,” she says. “Although there isn’t a great deal of material, what we have is very evocative of the time and tells some fascinating personal stories. I hope visitors find it just as rewarding.”

A varied role

During the war, British nurses worked in casualty clearing stations, field hospitals and base hospitals on many fronts. The majority were based either on the Western Front, in France and Flanders, or in the eastern Mediterranean, where they nursed the wounded from the Gallipoli campaign. Nurses were also posted to general hospitals in Mesopotamia, India and East Africa, with some independently minded nurses offering their services to the Societies of the Red Cross in France, Belgium, Serbia and Russia.

Among the individual stories that strike a chord with Christine is that of Mabel Annie Pearce, who trained at the Worcester General Infirmary between 1908 and 1911, before joining the Territorial Force Nursing Service. RCN Archives has an autograph album that Mabel kept during her time nursing in Salonika, northern Greece and Bondigheine in Italy.

Challenging conditions

"Although we don't know a great deal about her, to me Mabel's image is the epitome of a professional First World War nurse," explains Christine. "She also has a particular resonance because she was sent to Salonika, which was probably the most difficult posting. "She would have been working in tented and hutted hospitals, contending with both the heat of the summer and the cold of the winter, with dust, wind, flies and mosquitoes. Many of the nurses working here contracted malaria. It would have been an extremely difficult task to protect both patients and themselves in these conditions."

A photograph of Mabel and her twin brother, a soldier (see cover image), features on a specially produced bookmark highlighting the RCN society's work on the centenary.

"It’s important to remember both those who died and those who survived the First World War. It’s important to remember both those who died and those who survived the First World War," says Claire Chatterton, Chair of the RCN HoNS. "I'm struck by how much interest there has been from the public in the First World War generally, but especially in nursing, with some television programmes bringing that to the fore."

Claire highlights the complications of organising an exhibition in a relatively small area. “It’s a confined space, so it’s been challenging. But I think we’ve managed to tell the story in a succinct way – and so far it’s been really appreciated by those who’ve visited.”

Alongside the exhibition, the society has also been involved in a full programme

If you want to find out more about the role of nurses in the First World War, the RCN History of Nursing Society has organised a series of lectures and seminars:

• 5.30pm, 6 November, RCN Library and Heritage Centre: Sister Edith Appleton, Frontline Nurse and Diarist

• 5.30pm, 4 December, RCN Library and Heritage Centre: In the Company of Nurses: the British Army Nursing Service in the Great War (Yvonne McEwen)

• 5.30pm, 15 January, RCN Library and Heritage Centre: Nursing on the Home Front in the First World War (Stuart Wildman)

• 4pm, 12 February, RCN Archive, Edinburgh: Scottish Women’s Hospitals: The Nurses of Royaumont (Alison O’Donnell)

• 5.30pm, 12 March, RCN Library and Heritage Centre: Kate Luard’s Unknown Warriors. Kate’s great nephew, Tim Luard, will explore her memoirs of nursing in World War One.

To find out more, visit the library pages at www.rcn.org.uk
organising a series of lectures and seminars looking at various aspects of nursing during the war. "I’m delighted that we’ve managed to get such an array of really interesting speakers," says Claire.

“As well as nurse academics and social historians, we’re also honoured to have the relatives of two nurses who served in the First World War, who will be talking about their diaries.”

**Making contributions**

This includes a seminar on 6 November on Sister Edith Appleton, who served in Queen Alexandra’s Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve throughout the war. Often near the front in northern France, she wrote a daily journal, which was eventually published in 2012. Edith’s great nephew, Dick Robinson, will present the talk, with extracts from the diaries read by his wife.

“Substantial numbers of nurses went out to work near the frontline, while others cared for people back in the UK, so as an organisation it’s vital that we mark their contributions,” says Claire.

You can view the journey of a wounded soldier online on the RCN Library and Heritage Centre website: www.rcn.org.uk/front

Interested in nursing history? RCN members can join the History of Nursing Society: Visit www.rcn.org.uk

Violetta worked independently of the “official” military nursing services. She led one of the first volunteer units to enter Belgium in the autumn of 1914, and was taken prisoner by the Germans, before being released on the Danish frontier.

From here, she travelled to Russia and offered her services to the Russian Red Cross. After working in a flying column for several months, she was invalided home with shell shock and pleurisy. She kept a journal of her nursing in Belgium and Russia, *Field Hospital and Flying Column*, published in 1915.

Later in the war, she was matron of the famous L’Hopital de l’Ocean at La Panne in Belgium, before serving in a French field hospital, where she was injured by shell blast. She was awarded eight medals, including the Military Medal (Britain) and D’Ordre de la Reine Elisabeth (Belgium).

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Violetta’s story is one of many featured in the RCN’s exhibition

The RCN is remembering the contribution of nurses in the Great War

Violetta Thurstan

Violetta’s story is one of many featured in the RCN’s exhibition

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The Royal College of Nursing acts as an Introducer Appointed Representative to the Liverpool Victoria group of companies for General Insurance.
Veterans’ mental health

The psychological impact of war can be lasting. Kim Scott talks to one RCN member who’s helping vulnerable ex-service personnel return to civilian life

“There is still much to do and more investment to be made”

“Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is not a sign of weakness,” says Diane Palmer. “It is a consequence of what happens when you’ve done what others are afraid to.” Having worked with armed forces personnel and veterans with mental health conditions for more than a decade, Diane knows only too well how hard it can be for those who have served in combat to readjust to life back home.

“The military trains people to think in a certain way; to be instinctive and act on impulse. Servicemen and women are used to having boundaries and their lives shaped by structure and hierarchy. They don’t unlearn behaviours overnight.” Diane, a registered mental health nurse and qualified social worker, was formerly employed by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) with responsibility for the medical discharge support of serving personnel in transition to civilian life.

It was in this role that she identified a gap in mental health services for veterans that has gone on to shape the rest of her nursing career.

“I found the people I was working with felt abandoned once they left the military. They often weren’t eligible for primary level support and didn’t meet the criteria for secondary mental health care. Their needs were quite unique and not easily met by existing NHS provision.”

Tackling the issue

Three years ago Diane co-founded the North Essex Veterans Mental Health Network, a three-way alliance with the MoD, NHS and Combat Stress, which led to a bid for government funding that enabled the creation of a specialist veterans’ mental health team called Veterans First. She left the MoD in May 2012 to set up and manage the service that has since helped support 250 former service personnel from across the whole of North Essex.

“What we offer is rare,” adds Diane. “We assess the individual needs of each person and provide a holistic support plan. We essentially co-ordinate all the different services that person might need so they don’t become overwhelmed.” The team is small but effective. Most staff members have previous experience of working with veterans and have a deep understanding of the trauma their clients are experiencing.

As well as dealing with issues as varied as housing, income loss, alcohol misuse and social isolation, the team also provides specialist treatment for PTSD not usually offered by the NHS. This includes trauma-focused cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and eye movement desensitisation and reprocessing (EMDR), which involves making side-to-side eye movements, while recalling the traumatic incident with the aim of helping the brain reprocess distressing memories.

“It is such a fascinating and fulfilling role,” Diane concludes. “From a professional perspective, I’m still at the coalface, delivering treatments and helping improve people’s lives. But my involvement in Veterans First has also enabled me to influence mental health services for ex-service personnel on a national scale. There is still much to do and more investment to be made, but to know that I have touched the lives of these brave individuals is true job satisfaction in my eyes.”
Portrait of a nurse

Sophie Lowthian joins nursing student Ali Lomas for a photoshoot that is set to put nursing on the cultural map

“As a student 40 years ago, I never would have imagined I’d be back here waiting to have my photograph taken,” says Dame Christine Beasley, sitting among an array of camera equipment in the outpatients department at the Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel.

But this is no ordinary photograph. Dame Christine is here to have a photographic portrait taken to be exhibited at the world-renowned National Portrait Gallery (NPG).

The photographer is second-year nursing student and RCN member Ali Lomas, who juggles her nurse education with a career as a professional photographer. Having won the NPG’s prestigious Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize in 2009, Ali was commissioned by the gallery to photograph someone who has made a significant contribution to British culture.

“Chris was at the top of my list – she’s done so much for nursing. When I met her it brought back to me why I was drawn to the profession. There’s a warmth about her, she’s an inspiration really,” says Ali, as she sets up the shoot in a part of the hospital that’s due to be knocked down later this year. “It’s quite nice we’re preserving a little bit of history with the choice of location,” she adds.

A privilege

When Dame Christine was first asked if she was willing to be involved she says she was surprised. “I just thought, what a privilege. It’s quite humbling. And it’s very special that Ali is a nursing student as well as a photographer.

“I’m thrilled the portrait is about honouring nursing,” she adds. “Some people still have a very old-fashioned view of nursing which can be quite dangerous. We need to change public perception of what nurses are in the 21st century.”

Ali sets about directing Dame Christine in the shoot, trying out different angles. A few shots are taken with England’s former chief nursing officer wearing her honours, but Ali decides to take some shots without. “I’m keen to capture Chris as a person,” she says. “I want the portrait to have a natural feeling to allow for Chris’ personality to shine through.”

The shoot provides Dame Christine with an opportunity to reflect on how nursing has changed since she was a student. “Being here takes me right back,” she says. “A lot has changed since then, but what hasn’t is that nursing is about human beings, and human beings, in a fundamental way, stay the same. They need to be cared for when they are unwell – looked after, listened to. It was the same in 1962 and it was the same for Florence Nightingale.”

With the shoot wrapped up, Ali explains what inspired her move into nursing. “I wanted to do something that wasn’t superficial –
I’m thrilled the portrait is about honouring nursing

something where I came second,” she says. “I do miss spending so much time on photography but I’ve fallen in love with nursing. It’s hard, and challenging – a million times harder than I thought, but we aren’t here to be heroes.

“Some people aspire to be a nurse and some people aspire to the fashion world. To me, the Christines of this world are just that little bit more special,” adds Ali. “I hope young people might see this alongside all the other portraits and think about the options open to them in life.”

The portrait will be on display from 10 November. Visit www.npg.org.uk

Career profile
Dame Christine Joan Beasley began training in 1962 at the Royal London Hospital and worked as a staff nurse. In the 1980s and early 90s she took on senior roles at the Ealing and Riverside health authorities before moving into wider regional nurse director posts. She was Chief Nursing Officer for England between 2004 and 2012 and is a fellow of the RCN.
Nursing on the battlefield

The evacuation of wounded soldiers from the Western Front was a slow process, often taking days. They were transferred by train, or even by barge, from casualty clearing stations behind the front lines to base hospitals near the coast.

The contrast with today is stark, as Major Chris Carter, Chair of the RCN Defence Nursing Forum, demonstrated in a talk about casualty evacuation in the conflict in Afghanistan. Nowadays, evacuation is carried out by helicopter. The UK Defence Medical Services Medical Emergency Response Team consists of specialist medical personnel – a doctor, nurse and emergency nurse – ensuring the right people are in the right place at the right time.

Major Carter also outlined the 10-1-2 clinical timelines guidelines, which aim to provide enhanced battlefield first aid to wounded soldiers within 10 minutes, enhanced field care within an hour and damage control surgery within two hours.

The event featured a talk on dealing with blast injuries by Lieutenant Commander Victoria Long, Burns and Plastics Nursing Officer/Nurse Education Adviser for Queen Alexandra’s Royal Naval Nursing Service; and Dr Claire Chatterton, Chair of the History of Nursing Society, spoke about emotional care, “from shell shock to post traumatic stress disorder”.

The day finished with presentations by Captain Corinna Conley, Mental Health Nursing Officer in the Queen Alexandra’s Royal Army Nursing Corps, and Corporal Stu Randal QARANC, a military student nurse at Birmingham City University.

Advising on Ebola

RCN Critical Care and In-flight Forum member Laura Anderson is Co-ordinating Nurse for International SOS and has played an important role in advising people about Ebola

International SOS gives medical, security and travel support to organisations and their employees across the globe. It provides them with advice and assistance, such as directing them to the best medical facilities and, in extreme situations, helping with evacuation and repatriation.

As Co-ordinating Nurse at the company’s London assistance centre, Laura’s day-to-day work involves dealing with calls from a broad range of clients all over the world.

Following the Ebola outbreak in West Africa earlier this year, International SOS saw a surge in requests for assistance. Its Paris office, which deals with Africa, set up a dedicated Ebola hotline, which Laura helped to staff from London for two weeks in August.

“There were a range of requests,” she said. “People wanted to know about the effects of Ebola and what our evacuation capabilities were, along with information about airport screenings, border closures and quarantine procedures. Our job was to educate them about the situation.”

As the Ebola situation continues to change, enquiries from business travellers and expatriates keep coming in. Managing the hotline is a challenging experience and Laura got a lot out of it.

“It was an exciting role with different challenges each day. It was a huge learning curve and I developed a good understanding of West Africa,” she said.

“Most people were reassured after speaking to us and being able to assist them in this way was really rewarding.”

Our job was to educate people about the situation

Find out more about the RCN Critical Care and In-flight Forum at www.rcn.org.uk/forums
CYP publications

Several RCN publications relating to children and young people have been updated recently. Safeguarding Children and Young People – Every Nurse’s Responsibility is aimed at all nursing staff and highlights the issues that help recognise the warning signs of abuse.

Children and Young People’s Cardiac Nursing: RCN Guidance on Roles, Career Pathways and Competence Development has been updated to ensure the original nursing standards developed in 2011 remain fit for purpose.

Nutrition in Children and Young People with Cancer examines the particular problems faced by children with cancer in obtaining good nutrition, and recommends ways in which hospitals can improve food provision.

Download these publications from the A-Z listing at www.rcn.org.uk/publications

New ALCS guidance

The RCN has recently launched a publication called Peripheral Neurovascular Observations for Acute Limb Compartment Syndrome – RCN Consensus Guidance. Developed in conjunction with the British Orthopaedic Association, it provides guidance for the early detection of acute limb compartment syndrome (ALCS).

The guidelines cover the care of adults, children and young people with potential ALCS due to injury or treatment for limb conditions. They will help nursing staff to identify ALCS and reduce risk; and they explain the role of clinical observation, plus compartment pressure measurement in early detection of the condition.

Perioperative event

The RCN Perioperative Forum held a joint event with the British Anaesthetic & Recovery Nurses Association and the Society for Obesity and Bariatric Anaesthesia last month. The Obese Patient: Key Issues in Perioperative Management featured talks, workshops and poster and exhibition viewings. Perioperative Forum member Susan Pirie attended the event. “What was clear was an overall commitment to provide the best possible care to patients,” she said.

Fertility nursing

Chriss Eftekhar, a member of the RCN Fertility Nursing Forum, has been involved with the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) Information for Quality programme. The programme is reviewing the way clinics provide data to the HFEA and how it is used, published and presented. The HFEA wants to hear from as many stakeholders as possible, and members are urged to read the online consultation document (www.hfea.gov.uk/9165.html) and complete the accompanying survey (www.hfea.gov.uk/9166.html) by 12 November.

Joint conference

The RCN is hosting a joint conference with the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA) this month. The MND Journey - Through Patient and Practitioner Eyes, takes place at RCN headquarters on 5 November. It will feature leading speakers from the fields of research, palliative care, occupational therapy, dietetics, respiratory care and cognitive dysfunction. For more information visit www.rcn.org.uk/mnd14

World AIDS Day is held on 1 December every year to raise awareness about HIV and AIDS. Between 2011 and 2015 it has the theme Getting to Zero: Zero New HIV Infections. Zero HIV-Related Deaths.

By joining in World AIDS Day you can help to challenge the discrimination and stigma faced by people living with HIV, raise awareness of HIV to members of the public, educate colleagues on the facts about HIV and encourage people to test. The RCN Public Health Forum is currently leading on a piece of work to raise awareness of HIV among all health and social care workers.

If all nurses, health care assistants and students have awareness and understanding of HIV this would dramatically change the lives of people living with the condition. We need less blame, less shame, less stigma and less HIV.

www.rcn.org.uk/publichealth
**EVENTS**

Please find more details of all the events listed by visiting the region and country pages on the website or [www.rcn.org.uk/events](http://www.rcn.org.uk/events)

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### Advances and current practice in ENT and maxillofacial nursing

**Monday 24 November**

RCN HQ, 20 Cavendish Square, London

RCN ENT/Maxillofacial Nursing Forum conference 2014

Developed by nurses for nurses, this one-day conference will include evidence-based presentations to update clinical practice and provide a platform for discussion within ear, nose and throat (ENT)/maxillofacial (MAX) nursing. Nurses with an interest in ENT/MAX and decontamination in ENT are invited to attend and gain valuable access to best practice examples to take back to the workplace and improve patient outcomes.

For more information email rebecca.hoole@rcn.org.uk with ENT/MAX conference in the subject line.

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### Northern Ireland

[www.rcn.org.uk/northernireland](http://www.rcn.org.uk/northernireland)

**Belfast**

Friday 14 November

RCN Northern Ireland HQ, 17 Windsor Avenue, Belfast BT9 6EE

RCN Northern Ireland Community Nursing Network Conference

**District Nursing Service – Transformation or Fragmentation?** This is a free event. For more information contact Clare McHugh from the corporate support team on 02890 384600 or email CST@rcn.org.uk

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### Scotland

[www.rcn.org.uk/scotland](http://www.rcn.org.uk/scotland)

**Wishaw**

Tuesday 11 November, 5.30pm

Ronald Miller Education Suite, Wishaw General Hospital, 50 Netherton St, Wishaw ML2 0DP Lanarkshire and State Hospital branch AGM.

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### Wales

[www.rcn.org.uk/wales](http://www.rcn.org.uk/wales)

**Ty Maeth**

Friday 14 November

RCN Wales HQ, Ty Maeth, Cardiff

Two RCN Wales seminars on diabetes – the morning session is aimed at registered nurses and the afternoon one at health care support workers. For an application form or more information contact Rhona Workman on 029 2068 0713 or email rhona.workman@rcn.org.uk

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### East Midlands

[www.rcn.org.uk/eastmidlands](http://www.rcn.org.uk/eastmidlands)

**Nottingham**

Saturday 8 November, registration at 9am

BMI The Park Hospital, Sherwood Lodge Drive, Arnold, Nottingham NG5 8RX

RCN Society of Orthopaedic and Trauma Nursing (Nottinghamshire Group) study day.

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### Northern

[www.rcn.org.uk/northern](http://www.rcn.org.uk/northern)

**Newcastle upon Tyne**

Thursday 6 November, 10am–4pm

Royal Station Hotel, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 5DH

Multicultural Nurses’ Conference

For more information, including the agenda, email mandy.clark@rcn.org.uk

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### North West

[www.rcn.org.uk/northwest](http://www.rcn.org.uk/northwest)

**Warrington**

Thursday 27 November

The Centre at Birchwood Park, Warrington WA3 6YN, 9am–4pm

RCN North West Regional Conference

For more information email karen.hughes@rcn.org.uk

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### South East

[www.rcn.org.uk/southeast](http://www.rcn.org.uk/southeast)

**Eastleigh**

Wednesday 19 November, 9.30am–12.30pm/1.30pm–4.30pm

Conference Room, Nuffield Hospital, Winchester Road, Chandlers Ford, Eastleigh

S053 2DW

HCA workshop

The RCN will be running two identical free workshops for HCAs, covering safeguarding, accountability, consent, delegation and teamwork. To secure your place email newbury.office@rcn.org.uk stating which session you would like to attend.

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### South West

[www.rcn.org.uk/southwest](http://www.rcn.org.uk/southwest)

**Dorchester**

Wednesday 17 December, 5.30pm

Education Centre, Dorset County Hospital, Williams Ave, Dorchester DT1 2JY

West Dorset branch AGM.

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### West Midlands

[www.rcn.org.uk/westmidlands](http://www.rcn.org.uk/westmidlands)

**Shrewsbury**

Thursday 13 November, 2pm

Room 1, The Redwood Centre, Bicton Heath, Shrewsbury

SY3 8DS

RCN Shropshire Local Learning Event

For more information email adele.bird@rcn.org.uk

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### Yorkshire & The Humber

[www.rcn.org.uk/yorkshireandhumber](http://www.rcn.org.uk/yorkshireandhumber)

**Leeds**

Monday 10 November, 9am–4pm

Lecture Theatre, Level 7 Bexley Wing, St James’ Hospital, Leeds

RCN educational event for non-registered members run by the Leeds branch. For more information email adele.bird@rcn.org.uk

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This study day has been organised by the RCN Society of Orthopaedic and Trauma Nursing (Nottinghamshire Group) to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the group’s formation. For more information email knight.chris@ntlworld.com or ruth_hartley@btconnect.com

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**Eastern**

[www.rcn.org.uk/eastern](http://www.rcn.org.uk/eastern)

**Godmanchester**

Wednesday 10 December

Woodgreen Animal Shelter, Godmanchester

Cambridgeshire PE29 2NH

Cambridgeshire County Conference

For more information, or to book a place, contact Carole Vincent on 01284 717723 or email carole.vincent@rcn.org.uk

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**London**

[www.rcn.org.uk/london](http://www.rcn.org.uk/london)

**London**

Friday 14 November

RCN HQ, 20 Cavendish Square, London

RCN NHS Nursing in Ambulatory Care Conference

This is a free event for the RCN Emergency Care Association. Programme includes case studies from high-volume sites. Spaces are limited and offered on a first come, first served basis. For more information email louise.walczak@rcn.org.uk

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This is a free study day to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the group’s formation. For more information email karen.hughes@rcn.org.uk

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