Promoting better care

The RCN has reaffirmed its commitment to tackling poor standards of care following damning reports on the treatment of older patients and people with learning disabilities.

Following a BBC Panorama documentary showing the abuse of vulnerable clients and critical hospital inspections by the Care Quality Commission, RCN Chief Executive Dr Peter Carter said: ‘There is simply no excuse for failing to treat patients with the respect and dignity they deserve.’

He acknowledged that such examples were rare but said they overshadow good nursing care and were unacceptable. He called for those responsible to be held to account.

The RCN has a number of ways to help members promote excellence in practice, including a national project on the care of people with dementia in acute settings. It aims to identify best practice and provide guidance to staff.

The RCN’s Principles of Nursing Practice are being used across the UK to guide nurses and their teams to improve practice and aid the delivery of safe, quality patient care.

The RCN also runs programmes to support clinical leadership and quality improvement. Read more at www.rcn.org.uk/bulletinextra

See page 3.
RN helps secure NHS Direct win

Nursing staff at NHS Direct will have their say over changes to weekend shift patterns, after a grievance lodged by the RCN on behalf of 98 members was upheld.

Part-time staff were told the number of weekend shifts they worked would increase. At a collective dispute hearing, their grievance was upheld as NHS Direct had not consulted individuals or the RCN on changes to employees’ terms and conditions.

The members will now meet with their line managers and be asked if they are able to increase the number of weekends they work.

A joint statement was issued by the RCN and NHS Direct which said that the service’s 1,400 nurses could not be forced to work the extra weekend shifts, but it had been agreed that rota changes were needed.

RCN Employment Relations Adviser Gary Kirwan said: ‘This case shows that members should not work outside, or accept changes to, their terms and conditions without consulting an RCN representative first.

‘Part-time staff at NHS Direct have the option of increasing their weekend work, which they were not offered initially, or remaining on their current work patterns.’

Make a difference to your specialism

The RCN’s forums are looking for new steering committee members.

Joining a steering committee is a great chance to influence your specialism, improve patient care and support the professional work of the College.

Forums enable thousands of members who share a nursing specialty or area of interest to come together and influence practice. As a steering committee member, you will facilitate this work and can get involved in crucial projects – for example, developing best practice guidelines.

RCN backs free poems project

The RCN is backing a project that supplies poems free of charge for use in health care settings.

Poems for... has so far seen poems displayed in hospitals and health centres up and down the country. They are designed to inspire, support and entertain and have been funded by both the Department of Health and NHS Estates.

Collections available include 50 poems on the subject of waiting and another celebrating diversity. Download these or apply for a free pack of poem posters from www.poemsfor.org (the postage is chargeable).

One of those featured is These are the hands, by Michael Rosen, written to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the NHS. You can read this poem at www.rcn.org.uk/bulletinextra
Speak up when care fails

RCN President Andrea Spyropoulos urges members to report any care that falls below standard

As nurses, we are always disheartened and disappointed to learn of new cases where patients haven’t been given the care they deserve.

The most recent report from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) is no exception, containing some truly shocking stories of the neglect of older patients in three hospitals in particular. The details in the report make very difficult reading: patients left with food that is out of reach or without water and being spoken to in a condescending and dismissive way.

It paints a depressing picture of parts of the NHS that are seemingly not able to care for older people in a dignified, compassionate and caring way. We, as a profession, need to be very honest about the situation. We know, for example, that staffing levels have a direct impact on the quality of care provided to patients so it’s down to us to stand up and protect them and to managers to ensure the ratio is right.

A recent RCN survey showed that there was an average of 17 patients for every nurse in care homes in England.

For those of you who feel there’s nothing you can do – there is. If you see care that you know isn’t good enough, you can report it. If you exhaust all the options available to you with your employer, you can speak to the RCN. Our whistleblowing hotline is here for you, confidential and free to use. We came into this profession to care for patients, to offer hope, not despair. If you see something that you know isn’t good enough, tell us.

RCN whistleblowing hotline: 0345 772 6300.

Andrea Spyropoulos
RCN President

PRIMARY CARE TRUSTS

Help protect nurses and nursing

The RCN is recruiting new representatives working in primary care trusts (PCTs) in England to help safeguard the interests of members and nursing.

The Health and Social Care Bill proposes abolishing PCTs, and the new representative role is designed to help protect the terms and conditions of nurses as changes to commissioning are enacted. The representatives will be advocates for the roles nurses can play in the new structures.

PCTs are themselves setting up staff committees and the representative role will help support nursing staff who sit on those committees.

A first cohort of representatives recently completed a development programme designed to equip them with the skills needed to work on behalf of members in PCTs.

Patricia Marquis, Regional Director for the RCN’s South East region, said: ‘We had a really dynamic, motivated group from all over England who were keen to learn about organisational change and nursing’s position in relation to the health bill.’

She added: ‘But we need more members to take on these roles. In return we’ll offer them all the support they need.’

Email patricia.marquis@rcn.org.uk for more details.

www.rcn.org.uk/bulletinextra
**NEWS IN BRIEF**

**Help fight violence**
The RCN is looking for members to join a task and finish group on how to raise awareness of violence against women and children. The group will work to develop practice-based resources for nursing staff. If you have professional experience in this area and would like to join, visit www.rcn.org.uk/appointments – the deadline for applications is 8 July.

**Work in the independent or non-NHS sectors?**
The RCN is keen to improve its reach and effectiveness in the independent and non-NHS sectors. To ensure that RCN materials and promotional activities are relevant, the RCN marketing team is seeking a small number of members to comment on these issues. If you are interested in helping the RCN connect with members – and potential members – in these areas, please email victoria.barnett@rcn.org.uk

**RCN social care survey coming soon**
The RCN will soon run a member survey to ask for views about staffing, regulation and inspection of care homes. It is important to consider the ability for nurses and health care support workers to deliver high quality care – and how the regulatory scheme, including inspections, can help identify problems before and after they occur. This work is vital in safeguarding the delivery of quality services to some of the most vulnerable. Look out for the invitation to take part in the survey soon.

**END OF LIFE CARE**

**Charter a ‘catalyst for improvement’**

The RCN has teamed up with the Royal College of General Practitioners to produce a charter for end of life care.

The charter outlines best practice that all patients deserve from their primary health care team, and includes seven pledges to patients reaching the end of their lives.

The charter, to be displayed in GP practices across England, is the result of collaborative work between patients, nurses, GPs and others. A letter co-signed by Lynn Young, RCN Primary Care Adviser, is being sent to practices offering GPs advice on how best to use the charter.

RCN Chief Executive Dr Peter Carter said: ‘There is no doubt that end of life services have significantly improved in recent years, but there is still a long way to go before we can be confident that people always receive the best possible care. The charter will be a catalyst for further improvement.’

The charter is available via the RCN website. Visit http://tinyurl.com/3f57jbr

**INTERNATIONAL**

**RCN plus ONE highlight poverty**

The RCN recently hosted an event with ONE, the charity set up by U2 lead singer Bono, to help combat the spread of preventable diseases and reduce poverty.

The event was attended by more than 100 experts on the developing world, including Stephen O’Brien, a minister from the Department of International Development.

RCN Chief Executive Dr Peter Carter welcomed the Government’s recent commitment to enshrine in law the spending of 0.7 per cent of UK GDP on international aid.

Guests were then shown the impact aid spending has had, with more than 15 million more children alive as a result of vaccinations and more than 46 million more children in school.

To join the RCN in supporting ONE, please visit the website at www.one.org

**MIDWIFERY**

**Look out for Gill’s blog from Durban**

RCN forum member Gill Barber is heading for South Africa this week to attend the 29th Triennial Congress of the International Confederation of Midwives.

Gill, who sits on the RCN Midwifery and Fertility Nursing Forum steering committee, will be writing a daily blog from the four-day congress, which starts on 19 June, for the forum web pages on the RCN site.

Conference themes highlight major challenges facing midwifery and maternal health globally.

Look out for Gill’s blog at www.rcn.org.uk/midwifery

**RCN ELECTIONS**

**Still time to stand for RCN elections**

Members are reminded that nominations are still open for this year’s RCN Council and RCN Students Committee elections.

If you would like to ‘stand up for nursing’ by standing for office, visit www.rcn.org.uk/elections where you will find full details.

The deadline for receipt of nominations is 29 June. Voting opens on 27 July and will run until 14 September.

Results will be declared on 19 September with winning candidates taking up office on 26 October.

**Pictured left:** Guests at the joint RCN and ONE event included RCN Deputy President Cecila Anim
A look at life inside

Karl Marshall, a nurse at Long Lartin Prison in Worcestershire and the RCN’s liaison link for custodial services in the West Midlands, reflects on the unique demands and rewards of nursing ‘on the inside’

There’s a line in A Life Inside by convicted murderer Erwin James that reads: ‘You meet a lot of people inside, many of whom become acquaintances, associates or even, occasionally, allies. But contrary to what some on the outside believe, it’s rare you make friends.’

As a mental health nurse in a high-security prison, these words are often in my thoughts when working with prisoners and prison staff. I entered nursing within the criminal justice service with no real knowledge of the clients or the environment. Nothing in my previous 10 years as an RMN, or anything before, had prepared me for the challenge.

To go straight into a high-security establishment was the biggest learning experience of my professional career. The culture shock was enormous – everything from the security to the language used by the prisoners threatens to overwhelm your nursing instincts.

Meeting Luke

During the first few months, I came into contact with Luke, whose mother had recently committed suicide shortly after a rare visit to see him. Luke was undertaking a course with the psychology department and his tutors were concerned that he had not shown any outward reaction to his mother’s death. I had often seen Luke walking past me, waiting to be called up to the prison gym. Our knowledge of each other then was via eye contact only.

One Friday I called Luke to the health care department for our first meeting. I introduced myself, explained my role and how his name had come to my attention. Other than a brief acknowledgement, Luke remained impassive. I outlined how I felt our ‘sessions’ should go, what we would try to look at and how I hoped this would help him, but he offered little in the way of response either in this meeting or those we had every Friday thereafter. Mostly we sat in near silence. I felt we were getting nowhere.

So I began one of our subsequent sessions by asking him about his gym attendance – I’m a keen runner, and we began talking about this. It was the eureka moment. Luke spent the rest of the session enthusing about his fitness regime and its importance in his life. As he relaxed, he started to allow me into his world. I learned about his life outside prison, about some of the choices he had made that had got him into trouble and, eventually, about why he couldn’t grieve for his mother – she had abused him as a child and been the cause of his embarking on a ‘career’ in crime.

A sense of self-esteem

Over the ensuing months, as he talked, and I listened, I saw him change – from a man alone to someone around whom others began to feel comfortable. He came to be regarded by other prisoners as a source of advice and help – and he began to view himself differently, gaining a sense of self and self-esteem.

Luke has used these attributes as a platform to proceed through the prison system in a positive way. He is now in an open prison, waiting to embrace what he hopes will be imminent parole. He is a ‘success’ – but not everyone I have worked with has been.

In prison any ‘success’ seems so much more profound than anywhere else. To work as a nurse in prison – at any level, in any specialty – can bring satisfaction far greater than anything you will gain elsewhere, both clinically and personally. Prison can truly be life changing – and not just for the person you are working with.
Members who play an active role in the RCN say it’s a great way to get the most from their membership – not surprising as RCN representatives have a real impact on the working lives of colleagues and, ultimately, on patients’ wellbeing.

Tracey Budding, an RCN steward and Chair of the RCN membership and representation committee, is proud to support members and protect patient care. ‘My work as an RCN steward has helped me make a real difference in the workplace where I am able to challenge poor practice and champion nursing at every opportunity.’

RCN representatives are essential to the organisation’s work and are given first-class learning and development opportunities. The RCN is now rolling out a mentorship programme to help all representatives with their continuing professional development – a key benefit for representatives who are given support to increase their knowledge and develop new, transferable skills. It doesn’t matter where you work, if you are a registered nurse, student or health care assistant, working within the NHS or outside – everyone is welcome in these important roles.

New representatives are supported by their regional officers, through mentoring and are only asked to do what they feel is within their capabilities. They are legally entitled to paid time off to carry out their duties and undertake ongoing learning and development.

Benefits for you
Being a representative can help you personally, too. Laura Falconer from Scotland, now working in London, says that being an RCN student information officer helped her apply for jobs. ‘It gave me great networking opportunities and prepared me for my first job interviews,’ she says. ‘I was more aware of what was going on in health care and the national picture.’

Want to find out more?
There’s more about becoming a representative in the RCN publication Your chance to make a difference – becoming an RCN representative available via www.rcn.org.uk/bulletinextra

You don’t have to make a firm commitment at this stage, but the RCN can give you more information so you can decide if it’s the right choice for you.

Opening many doors
Have you thought about becoming an RCN representative?
Sharon Palfrey explains the benefits – to you and your colleagues

‘The best decision I ever made’
Alan White was far from an expert on the RCN when he joined in 1987. ‘At the time I knew nothing of the organisation or even what a trade union did,’ he admits.

Although Alan made good use of his membership by accessing the RCN for professional development and to save money, it wasn’t until seven years later that he needed help from his local steward, after his manager attempted to downgrade his post.

‘His knowledge and influence in my situation fascinated me,’ Alan says. ‘I toyed with the idea of being a steward myself, but never really thought I would have the skills. But I eventually plucked up the courage to go for it.’

Although he later took a break from his steward’s work, he found himself drawn back when he changed his working role. ‘This was the best decision I ever made. It opened up many doors for me. The more RCN involvement I had, the more I realised it was the direction I wanted to go in. I thoroughly enjoyed the challenge and stimulation the role brought me.’

Last year – and after a great deal of negotiating – Alan became a full-time steward in his trust. ‘I haven’t looked back since. My skills, knowledge and ability have increased dramatically. I now feel that the RCN is a visible presence in the trust and has an active role around the negotiating table,’ he says.

Alan is now a part-time assistant officer for the RCN. He continues his work as an RCN steward in his trust.
Pride of the RCN

RCN member Leslie-May Harrison has been recognised for her inspirational work in helping patients with breast cancer.

Nursing staff don’t get to mingle with the rich and famous very often. But one RCN member from Poole in the south west of England has shared the red carpet with celebrities having been recognised for her inspirational work in supporting patients with breast cancer.

Leslie-May Harrison is passionate about nursing and women’s health issues. After setting up The Harbour Girls, a support group that meets monthly, she was nominated for a Pride of Britain award by patients who attend the group meetings. The awards aim to celebrate the achievements of ‘remarkable people who make the world a better place’.

Winner of the south west regional award and runner-up in the national award, Leslie-May, an RCN steward, started the group in 2003 by inviting everyone she had nursed through breast cancer to a tea party. ‘Since then, it’s gone from strength to strength,’ she says. ‘We never see everyone together but we have up to 800 members of the group who all get letters telling them about our monthly events. We have speakers who cover a range of relevant subjects such as counselling or make-up. At the moment, members of the group are arranging a ball.’

But Leslie-May doesn’t just help her patients; she thinks it’s essential that partners are not forgotten. ‘They come to me for advice and support, too. And it’s important that we provide it, as they are the ones who pick up the pieces.’

‘When you are fighting breast cancer, you are not on your own. I want to empower patients with the knowledge they need to cope and give them the best treatment’
Leslie-May Harrison

‘Just doing my job’
Leslie-May says she felt ‘incredibly humbled’ to be nominated for the award because she was ‘just doing my job’. But, she says, it is very important to remember that nursing staff must be true to themselves when dealing with all patients. ‘It is a gift to nurse people when they are so vulnerable. At the awards ceremony I spoke to household names such as Jonathan Ross, Amanda Holden, Prince Charles and the presenters of Loose Women. They were all so appreciative and supportive of nursing staff – especially the Nolan sisters who had themselves experienced personally the impact that breast cancer can have. They are just like everyone else – they need the help of nurses in times of distress.’

Working together
Leslie-May works in a private hospital but has previously worked in women’s health and emergency nursing in the NHS. This has given her valuable experience of nursing people from all backgrounds. But wherever nursing staff are employed, team-working is central to patient care, says Leslie-May. It is obvious that the mutual support given to all the interdisciplinry team in her place of work is an essential part of the role. But her enthusiasm and passion for providing help to women and men with breast cancer has to be one of the key reasons for her success. ‘Life is so precious – we are very lucky,’ she says. ‘I love my job. I wouldn’t do it otherwise.’

Read more about the RCN Cancer and Breast Care Forum at www.rcn.org.uk/cancer

Information on the Pride of Britain awards is available at www.prideofbritain.com
It’s about focusing on what people can do, not on what they can’t,’ says RCN member Jim Blair, recently appointed Vice-chair of the Special Olympics GB.

Jim has been involved in the Special Olympics since 2009 and holds the position of Clinical Director for Health Promotion. You may see Jim’s work in action on your TV screens soon with the world games being held in Athens later this month.

Jim’s nursing skills have proved invaluable in his voluntary role but he has gained a lot from the work, too. ‘It’s not just the obvious new skills that you learn – working with these athletes gives you an insight into working with people with learning disabilities. You see people at their best and the quality and richness in life. You see the person and their qualities, and not the disability,’ he says.

A sense of worth
The Special Olympics is so much more than just a few games once or twice a year. The training never stops and is as important as the competition itself. ‘Through participation in the Special Olympics programme, athletes gain a significant sense of worth through socialising and achieving personal dreams and ambitions that can’t be easily met through other means,’ Jim says. ‘The healthy athletes programme ensures that people’s unmet health needs are identified and a plan of action put in place with and for the athlete.’

Jim, who is a consultant nurse for learning disabilities and a senior lecturer in learning disabilities, takes his voluntary role very seriously. He has set up a committee to look at health and wellbeing gains, improving health outcomes, identifying and addressing unmet health needs, and making appropriate referrals for the athletes.

Fighting negative attitudes
The Special Olympics programme gives people with learning disabilities the chance to be successful and to achieve. ‘They are given a sense of worth and confidence, and develop a new skill set. The games destroy negative opinions and enable people to achieve in a safe and friendly environment,’ says Jim. ‘But be in no doubt, they are athletes. I can honestly say to all of them, you have done something I haven’t done – you are an Olympian.’

Games with goals
One RCN member is playing a central role in the Special Olympics movement, which provides an opportunity for people with learning disabilities to represent the UK on the world stage.

Key facts about the Special Olympics
- Special Olympics Great Britain is the country’s largest provider of year-round sports training and competition programmes for children and adults with learning disabilities.
- Special Olympics Great Britain was established in 1978 as part of Special Olympics Inc.
- There are 135 clubs in England, Scotland and Wales.
- Training is provided in 26 sports.
- More than 8,000 children and adults with learning disabilities in Britain currently take part in the scheme.

Find out more at www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk

RCN Learning Disability Adviser Ann Norman says that Jim, a former committee member for the RCN Learning Disability Nursing Forum, is a great learning disabilities nursing role model. ‘I am thrilled to see his work as a real example of learning disabilities nursing leadership. We are proud of Jim at the RCN. He assisted us with the RCN Dignity campaign and helped us to get the expert service user involved.’

Find out more about joining the RCN’s Learning Disabilities Forum at www.rcn.org.uk/learning_disabilities and read the recently updated RCN publication Meeting the health needs of people with learning disabilities at www.rcn.org.uk/publications

To find out more about volunteering for Special Olympics GB, go to the website at www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk
**HCA launch coming soon**

The RCN is hosting an event to officially launch the HCA network in Scotland.

It will offer bite-sized development sessions to give network members attending an idea of the opportunities available. There will also be a chance to meet with other HCA colleagues and staff from all departments in the RCN in Scotland.

The HCA network is free to join and will provide members with up-to-date information to support them in their careers. All HCA network members will soon receive an email with further details about the launch.

To join the network and have access to this excellent development opportunity, please visit www.rcn.org.uk/hca-apnetwork

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**Students gather to share ideas**

Student information officers (SIOs) from across Scotland gathered at Glasgow Caledonian University last month for a networking day.

The event, organised by RCN student member Andy Wyllie (pictured above), was also attended by Scotland board members Graham Revie, Stewart Donnelly and Michael Brown, and former board member Andy Patrick.

The aim was to strengthen the local network and further engage SIOs and student members in RCN activities, including branches.

Andy said: ‘The SIO network day was really fun and productive with many student members converging on Glasgow from all over Scotland.

‘We had some excellent speakers – including RCN board members and Scottish SIO lead, Emma Taylor. With the day being such a success we are planning to have more local networking days throughout Scotland.’

If anyone wants to find out more about the SIO network or how to get involved, please email emma.taylor@rcn.org.uk or visit www.rcn.org.uk/sio

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**New guidance on nurse education**

New briefing papers have been released to help support universities, NHS employers and staff prepare for changes to pre-registration nursing training in Scotland.

New Nursing and Midwifery Council standards for pre-registration education, published in September last year, reflects the perspectives of various stakeholders on how nursing should be developed.

The standards also reflect changes to health care in the UK, by aiming to prepare nurses who can respond flexibly to current and future challenges.

NHS Education for Scotland (NES) has been working with stakeholders to prepare, and has held two national events and is publishing a series of briefing papers.

The first briefing paper, The new Nursing and Midwifery Council standards for pre-registration nursing education: advice on implementation for health services in Scotland, is available on the NES website at www.nes.scot.nhs.uk

The second paper on policy drivers is due later this month, with a third in the autumn. Email pamela.lazmirski@nes.scot.nhs.uk

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**NEWS IN BRIEF**

**Activist conference: date for your diary**

The next RCN activist conference in Scotland will be on 29 and 30 November at the Marriot Hotel in Glasgow. It will involve a full programme of events including workshops and plenary sessions. More details, including how to register, will follow. Please make a note of the date and pass this information to anyone who is thinking of becoming a representative.

**Mental health service for deaf people**

How do you support someone who has lost their hearing, perhaps as a result of illness or an accident? How can you help someone cope with relationship fallouts, job losses and the many other hurdles deafness can cause? With a clinical lead and three advanced practitioner nurses, NHS Scotland has launched a new national service to support deaf people with mental health issues. It also offers support to health care staff who come into contact with deaf people with mental health needs. For more details, visit http://tiny.cc/mhdeafservice

**Job guarantee scheme**

The new information page for the one year job guarantee scheme has been published on the NHS Education for Scotland website. The application process is now live for anyone registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council. An email to applicants who have recently expressed an interest has been sent out already. For details, visit www.nes.scot.nhs.uk
Claire helps raise nutritional standards

RCN member Claire Harcourt Watkins has helped raise nutritional standards for patients at her health board after attending an RCN Nutrition now study day

Claire used questionnaires and posters to demonstrate how patients would prefer to receive their oral nutritional supplements after the supplements had been chilled. Initially the work was carried out on the ward where Claire worked but following its success it was shared with other clinical areas in the Hywel Dda Health Board. 

Claire, who thanked Clinical Nurse Specialist Linda Morgan for her support, said: 'My aim is to highlight the importance of nutrition and hydration, and the pivotal role the nurse has working in partnership with the patient. From fortifying patients’ food, ordering snacks from the canteen or ensuring preferred flavour of oral nutritional supplement, as nurses we can make that difference.'

RCN’s All Wales nutrition campaign ended recently. Val Bailey, Professional Practice Co-ordinator, RCN Wales, said: 'The campaign has been excellent and there has been evidence of some very innovative practice for raising nutritional standards across the health care sectors.'

The RCN Welsh board thanked Val for her role in leading the work.

RCN welcomes new health minister

The RCN has welcomed the appointment of Lesley Griffiths, AM for Wrexham, as the new Minister for Health and Social Services in the Welsh Government.

The RCN has worked closely with former Welsh governments and ministers and looks forward to meeting the new minister to discuss opportunities for nursing staff to be more involved in improving health care delivery.

Tina Donnelly, Director of the RCN in Wales, said: ‘RCN Wales would like to take the opportunity to welcome Lesley Griffiths to her new role and we look forward to working with her.’

Ms Griffiths (pictured below) previously worked at Wrexham Maelor Hospital and was Chair of the cross-party group on hospices. She visited the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board soon after taking up her new position. RCN Assistant Officer Alison Goodfield said: 'It was very good to see the minister taking time to meet nurses so early on into her new appointment, particularly in light of the challenges facing the NHS and frontline services.'

Celebrating Learning at Work Day

RCN learning representatives Paul Richards and Jo-Anne Jones organised an event for health care staff at Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan to celebrate Learning at Work Day.

The day covered a range of areas including portfolio development and communication skills.

Paul said: ‘Some nurses were so motivated that they were asking for some sessions on interview skills which we hope will be held later in the year.’

Val Bailey, RCN Wales Professional Practice Coordinator, said: 'The purpose of the event was to promote the concept of learning and development in the workplace and there was positive feedback from delegates on all aspects of the session.'
RCN Council: your chance to stand

Members who would like to get involved in the work of the RCN, and want to help take the nursing agenda forward, may like to stand for election to RCN Council.

From representing the interests of members to making sure people’s opinions are heard at the highest levels, your experience and enthusiasm could make a difference.

The role requires integrity, good judgement and a passion for nursing.

Nominations must be signed by two officers from a branch or forum.

Seats representing Northern Ireland and student members are available. The term of office to represent Northern Ireland is four years and candidates must have held full and continuous RCN membership for at least three years before the nominations closing date.

The student member of Council position is for two years and nominations must be made by two student members.

There are also two RCN Students Committee seats for Northern Ireland available. Members with at least six months’ nurse training to complete on taking office can stand.

Nominations close at 16:30 on 29 June. For a nomination form, go to www.rcn.org.uk/elections or call 020 7647 3640.

Forensic forums share good practice ideas

The RCN Forensic Nursing Forum recently held a conference at RCN HQ in Belfast.

The full-day event was organised by the RCN forum with the Northern Ireland forensic forum on the theme of managing risk and liability.

The event attracted nursing professionals as well as multidisciplinary colleagues working in mental health, learning disability and the criminal justice system, in both inpatient and community settings.

Delegates had the chance to raise the profile of forensic health care in Northern Ireland and increase knowledge and understanding of managing risk and liability when caring for people with a mental illness or a learning disability.

The event also offered an opportunity to share best practice and establish valuable networks.

The key agencies in mental health, learning disability and criminal justice, including prison, probation and the police service, presented examples of best practice.

Carolyn to sit on public health group

Dr Carolyn Mason, RCN Northern Ireland Head of Professional Development, has been invited to represent the RCN on the Public Health Agency’s child development project board.

The group is a dynamic and inclusive representative group with membership from health and education across the statutory and voluntary sectors.

Carolyn said: ‘This is an exciting opportunity for the RCN to input into this important group and it is timely given that the College is about to publish its public health strategy.

‘The work of the group has the potential to impact upon the lives of children across Northern Ireland and improve their health and wellbeing.’

Noel McDonald (left) and Claire Lamza, from the RCN Forensic Nursing Forum, and speaker Maurice Devine, DHSSPS Nursing Officer

NEWS IN BRIEF

Assembly health committee members announced

The RCN has welcomed the announcement of the new membership of the Northern Ireland Assembly health committee. The committee will be chaired by Michelle Gildernew (Sinn Féin) and the Deputy Chair is Jim Wells (DUP), who served as chair before the recent elections. The other members are Michaela Boyle (Sinn Féin), Paula Bradley (DUP), Mickey Brady (Sinn Féin), Gordon Dunne (DUP), Mark H Durkan (SDLP), Sam Gardiner (UUP), Pam Lewis (DUP), John McCallister (UUP) and Kieran McCarthy (Alliance).

RCN to sit on pre-reg education group

Janice Smyth, Director of the RCN in Northern Ireland, has been asked to sit on a steering group convened by the Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council to look at the application and selection of students for pre-registration nursing programmes. The DHSSPS has asked for the project to be undertaken, and for it to include partnership working with education providers and health and social care trusts.

Unions to meet minister

RCN Northern Ireland Deputy Director Garrett Martin will represent members at an introductory meeting between new health minister Edwin Poots and the trade unions. They will discuss the current financial situation, the support of staff and delivery of health and social care in Northern Ireland.
Yorkshire & The Humber

Leeds Pride 2011

The RCN is proudly supporting Leeds Pride 2011 on Sunday 7 August. The event celebrates the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community and should attract 23,000 people to the city centre.

The event kicks off with a free concert in Millennium Square from noon, before a parade from 15:00.

As usual, RCN members from across the region will be taking part. Any who attend are asked to let the regional office know and send photos from the day. Email adele.bird@rcn.org.uk

Northern

Community nurse? Don’t fall out of the loop

A number of community-based RCN members in the North East and Cumbria have transferred to new NHS employers, as part of the Transforming Community Services agenda.

By now, most primary care providers have already integrated either with their corresponding acute provider, or with the NHS Cumbria Partnership – in the case of NHS Cumbria. This has resulted in a number of members changing their email addresses.

The RCN periodically emails members about important issues, including providing guidance where there are potential changes to terms and conditions. It is therefore vital to update email addresses and contact details, so the RCN can keep you up to date and supported through workplace changes.

Members can check their email address, by visiting www.rcn.org.uk/myrcn

East Midlands

Derby social enterprise values RCN input

A social enterprise in Derby has signalled its commitment to work with the RCN to champion the interests of patients and staff at a nurse-led NHS walk-in centre.

Staff transferred to Derbyshire Health United (DHU) earlier this month from NHS Derby City primary care trust.

A number of RCN members are employed at the centre as nurses or health care assistants.

London

Steward shares views with his local MP

Lead steward Mike Smith, from Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust, fed back members’ views to local Liberal Democrat MP Tom Brake at a meeting last month.

During the meeting, also attended by Regional Director Bernell Bussie, they discussed the Health and Social Care Bill, staffing levels, and additional payments for staff who worked the royal wedding bank holiday – paid at seven trusts in London, but not at Epsom and St Helier.

They also discussed preceptorship, as members working in outer south west London had reported their increments as newly qualified nurses due at six and 12 months had not been paid.

MR Brake, MP for Carshalton and Wallington, promised to look into why the payments had stopped.

Mike said he tries to meet regularly with the four local MPs, adding: ‘We were concerned about the new health bill and local changes to incremental points for newly qualified staff. Tom Brake did say he would feed back to Nick Clegg some of what we discussed.’

South East

Peter says hello to hospice staff

RCN Chief Executive Dr Peter Carter met the nursing and management team on a tour of the Princess Alice Hospice in Surrey, which this year is celebrating its 25th anniversary.

‘He opened a Department of Health-funded nursing station designed to allow staff to stay in contact with designated rooms and patients.

Dr Carter said: ‘I have been impressed by the commitment and pride shown by the nurses and the wider hospice team for the work they do.’
Fear for the future of local trust

The RCN is concerned about the future of St Helens and Knowsley NHS Trust after plans were revealed that could see services fragmented or lost.

The trust, rated excellent by the Care Quality Commission for the last two years, has significant financial problems due to private finance initiative repayments on its new hospital at Whiston and having to find general cost savings.

With trusts required to achieve foundation status by 2014, it faces three choices suggested by the Department of Health and NHS North West strategic health authority – merging with another trust, additional government funding, or entering a venture with a private provider.

A campaign backing the trust has been set up by community and patient groups following media speculation. RCN Officer Colm Byrne and representative Dave Parr have met and briefed local MPs George Howarth and Dave Watts, as well as St Helens Council leader Marie Rimmer.

Recently, the campaign fronted a series of public meetings where the RCN and local politicians called for the trust to be properly funded.

RCN appoints new regional director

The South West region is delighted to announce its new Regional Director is Jeanett Martin.

Jeanett, pictured below, is a former practice nurse and is a past Chair of the RCN Practice Nurse Association. She was previously an interim manager in the RCN Learning and Development Institute’s Enhancing Practice and Influencing team.

Jeanett has worked for the Medical Research Council as Senior Nurse Manager, as Director of Clinical Leadership and Quality for a London primary care trust, and as a director for an out-of-hours service in London. She is also a Visiting Lecturer in Health Care Law at the University of Reading.

Jeanett said: ‘I know how committed the staff and activists are in the South West and I am really looking forward to working with them on behalf of our members in the region.’

Jeanett takes over from Kate Tompkins, who is retiring after leading the team for seven years.

Take our district nursing survey

The RCN is conducting a confidential survey on the state of community and district nursing in the Eastern region.

District and community nursing are key to the Government’s NHS savings plan and its aim to deliver more care in the community. However, members are reporting that the sector in the Eastern region is coming under pressure and with no increase in investment.

‘The RCN needs members’ help to identify the state of district nursing in the region and to raise concerns.

The survey can be found at www.rcn.org.uk/easternsurvey

For more information or a copy of the survey, email kellie.norris@rcn.org.uk or call 0345 456 7846.

Members praise branch outreach events

Members have given the thumbs-up to a series of activities aimed at boosting their knowledge and skills through engagement with their local RCN branch.

Branches are a key part of the RCN’s structure, helping the organisation to deliver a local service as well as giving members an opportunity to participate in and influence its work.

In the West Midlands, a number of branches have started to combine or alternate regular meetings with free events that enable members to discuss and develop their practice and awareness of key nursing and health care issues.

Last month about 60 nurses and health care assistants attended the launch of the South Birmingham branch development programme at Birmingham Women’s Hospital. There was a Q&A with RCN Chief Executive Dr Peter Carter before a number of members stayed on for the branch meeting.

Sarah Kral, who attended a South Birmingham event on current issues in the NHS, said: ‘I really enjoyed the professional development side to the meeting as well as the branch issues and what is happening locally. It opened my eyes to how much the RCN does, and how loud our voice can be on issues that are important for nurses and patients.’

Details of branch events are listed in RCN Bulletin and appear on the events page at www.rcn.org.uk/westmidlands.
www.rcn.org.uk

SCOTLAND

22 AUGUST
Meaningful activities for people with dementia
Start of three-day course. Run by the University of Stirling. Call Lynsey Manson on 01786 467732 or email lynsey.manson@stir.ac.uk

WALES

12 JULY
Portfolio development
Study day at RCN Wales, Ty Maeth, Cardiff. Call Rhona Workman on 029 2025 1373 or 01345 456 7875 or email rhona.workman@rcn.org.uk

14 JULY
Portfolio development
Study day at The Frenel Fox Hotel, Bodendydd, St Asaph. For details contact Rhona Workman (as above).

16 SEPTEMBER
Drug administration
Study day at The National Botanic Garden of Wales, Llanarthne, Carmarthenshire. For details contact Rhona Workman (as above).

20 SEPTEMBER
Stroke
Evening seminar to be held at RCN Wales, Ty Maeth, Cardiff. For details contact Rhona Workman (as above).

23 SEPTEMBER
Vulnerability
RCN Emergency Care Association in Wales Conference to be held at RCN Wales, Ty Maeth, Cardiff. For details contact Rhona Workman (as above).

NORTHERN IRELAND

15–17 JUNE
RCN joint education forums third international conference
Beyond the borders: Innovations and challenges for nursing education conference. Europa Hotel, Great Victoria Street, Belfast. Contact suzanne.sindair@rcn.org.uk

16 JUNE
RCN fundamentals of care seminar – record keeping
Seminar aimed at all health care assistants and nursing auxiliaries. At Ivagh House Care Home, 62 Castlewelian Road, Banbridge, from 13:30-16:00. For more information call the Corporate Support Team (CST) on 028 9038 4600 or email cst@rcn.org.uk

17 & 29 JUNE
RCN OpenN workshop – achieving person-centred care in practice
This workshop will take place over two dates, a full-day and a half-day. RCN, 17 Windsor Avenue, Belfast. Contact the CST (as above).

21 JUNE
RCN treatment room and practice nurse network meeting
At RCN, 17 Windsor Avenue, Belfast, from 18:30. For details, contact the CST (as above).

22 JUNE
RCN fundamentals of care seminar – blood pressure
Seminar aimed at health care assistants and nursing auxiliaries. RCN, 17 Windsor Avenue, Belfast, from 09:30-12:30. For information contact the CST (as above).

UK

18 JUNE
Female genital mutilation
Eva Organization for Women conference at University of Leicester. For more information, call 07900 536984 or 07961 618589.

21 JUNE
Reducing HCAs
Maintaining patient safety: breaking the cycle of infection. Conference and exhibition at The Brewery, London. For further information email ron.pusey@govtoday.co.uk

24 JUNE
RCN Mental Health Nursing Forum conference and exhibition
Mental health nursing – an effective intervention? Event to be held at the Thistle Marble Arch, London W1. For further details please email Laura at mentalhealth@rcn.org.uk

29 JUNE
Assisted suicide and euthanasia
From 09:00-12:30 at The Hospice of St Francis, Berkhamsted. Full details are available online on the hospice’s website at www.stfrancis.org.uk

6–8 JULY
Leading an empowered organisation
Three-day course run by Ashton, Leigh and Wigan Community Healthcare NHS Trust from 09:00-16:00. For more information email marlene.welsh@alwhtpct.nhs.uk

15 JULY
RCN HCA/course and exhibition
Thinking differently – infection prevention in the new health care landscape. At the Manchester Conference Centre. More details from Laura at infectionprevention@rcn.org.uk

31 AUGUST
RCN School Nurses’ Community conference
RCN, 20 Cavendish Square, London W1. For further details please email mirka.ferdosian@rcn.org.uk

6 SEPTEMBER
RCN CYP Professional Issues Forum conference
At the Met Hotel, Leeds. Contact Mirka Ferdosian (as above).

LONDON

25 JUNE
Symptom control at end of life
At Mount Vernon Cancer Centre, Northwood, HA6 2RN. For more details call 01923 844777 or email anni.hall@nhs.net

5 JULY
RCN Outer South West London branch
Meeting in the Nonsuch Room, St Helier Hospital, from 19:00. Legal update for nurses and nursing.

7 JULY
Essential communications skills
At Mount Vernon Cancer Centre, Northwood, HA6 2RN. For further details call 01923 844777 or email anni.hall@nhs.net

14 JULY
Hypoxic Ischaemic Encephalopathy
Neonatal study day to be held at UCL, Roberts Building, 106 Lecture Theatre, London WC1E 6JE. To register for the day, email Leann davies on leann.davies@uch.nhs.uk or call 020 7387 6541.

21 JUNE
RCN Outer South East London branch
At 17:30 in Room 307, Mary Seacole Building, University of Greenwich.

1 AUGUST
Central venous catheters
At Mount Vernon Cancer Centre, Northwood, HA6 2RN. Call 01923 844777 or email anni.hall@nhs.net

SOUTH WEST

21 JUNE
RCN Torbay branch
At 18:30 (venue tbc). Email Yvonne kennett at y.kennett@nhs.net

22 JUNE
RCN Gloucestershire branch
Meeting in Conference Room 1, Charlton Lane Hospital, GL3 9DZ at 18:00. For more information please contact Tim Coupland, Branch Chair, at tim.coupland@glas.nhs.uk

26 JUNE
RCN Salisbury branch meeting
At 18:30 at the George & Dragon in Salisbury. Helen Hancox, Regional Officer, will be giving a talk on issues affecting community health staff. For more details please contact Laura Matless at lmatless@hotmail.co.uk

6 JULY
RCN East Dorset branch
Educational seminar by the Respiratory Early Discharge Scheme. At 18:00 at the Royal Bournemouth Hospital. For more details, email kathy.moore@bp-pct.nhs.uk

7 JULY
I don’t know what to say
One-day course from 09:30-16:30 at the Searie Room, Hospiscare, Dryden Road, Exeter EX2 5Jl. For further information please contact j.densham@hospiscare.co.uk

2 AUGUST
RCN East Dorset branch meeting
To be held at 18:00 at the Royal Bournemouth Hospital. For further information please email kathy.moore@bp-pct.nhs.uk

SOUTH EAST

22 JUNE
Transitions through partnership: working together for technology-dependent children and young people
Study day at the Children’s Trust, Tadworth. To book your place, call 01737 365840 or email getintouch@thechildrenstrust.org.uk

29 JUNE
RCN East Sussex branch
Meeting and study day from 09:30-16:00. Cooden Beach Hotel, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex, For bookings and further details please email anthea.richardson@esst.nhs – or write to Eye Department, Conquest Hospital, The Ridge, St Leonard’s-on-Sea, East Sussex TN37 7RD.

8 JULY
Childhood epilepsy study day
Held in Lingfield, Surrey, from 09:00-16:00. Contact the Childhood Epilepsy Information Service on 01342 832243, ext 296 or email info@ncpe.org.uk or visit www.ncpe.org.uk/epilepsy

14 JULY
RCN Hampshire branch
Meeting at Eastleigh Health Centre, Newtown Road, Eastleigh SO50 9AG. From 14:00-16:00. For further information, email jenny.redman@rowanshospice.co.uk or call her on 023 9225 0001.

15 JULY
Study day – The future of nursing in your hands!
For details call Peggy Pryer on 01227 832058 or 07860 691887 – or email peggypryer@yahoo.co.uk

NORTHERN

16 JUNE
RCN Cumbria branch
For details call 01697 456 787 or email northern.region@rcn.org.uk

1 JULY
Childhood epilepsy study day
In Gateshead, from 09:00-16:00. Contact the Childhood Epilepsy Information Service (as above).

12–13 SEPTEMBER
BACCN National conference 2011
First class critical care: using evidence to create the future. Newcastle racecourse, Newcastle upon Tyne. For details email info@baccnconference.org.uk
16 JUNE

Yorkshire & the Humber

RCN Calderdale and Huddersfield branch
Opportunity to plan agenda items for RCN Congress 2012. In the Boardroom, Huddersfield Royal Infirmary, from 18.30.

29 JUNE
RCN Scunthorpe branch
At 19.00 at the Butterwell House Education Centre, Scunthorpe General Hospital. All are welcome.

5 JULY
RCN North East Lincolnshire branch
Meeting from 17.30 at The Gardens, Diana Princess of Wales Hospital, Grimsby. For further details email helene.davis@nlg.nhs.uk

6 JULY
RCN North Yorkshire Coast branch
To be held at the Postgraduate Centre, Scarborough Hospital, Woodlands Drive, Scarborough, at 19.00. For further information, please email Roy Tomlinson at gottomlinson @talktalk.net

13 JULY
RCN Mid Yorkshire branch
NHS Direct, Springhill 4, Wakefield 41 Business Park, Brindley Way, Wakefield from 17.30. For further details please email Sue Panther at susan.panther@nhsdirect.nhs.uk

RCN Hull and East Yorkshire branch
Branch meeting from 16.00 at The Learning Centre, Willerby Hill, Beverley Road Willerby, East Yorkshire HU10 6ED. For more details please email Gill Craik at gill.craik @humber.nhs.uk.

1 AUGUST
RCN North Yorkshire Coast branch
To be held at the Postgraduate Centre, Scarborough Hospital, Woodlands Drive, Scarborough, at 19.00. For further information please email Roy Tomlinson at gottomlinson @talktalk.net

10 AUGUST
RCN Hull and East Yorkshire branch
Branch meeting from 16.00 at The Learning Centre, Willerby Hill, Beverley Road Willerby, East Yorkshire HU10 6ED. For further information please contact Gill Craik (details as above).

North West

27 JUNE
RCN Cheshire West branch
From 16.00-18.00 at University of Chester, Warrington (Paddock campus), Crab Lane, Warrington WA2 0DB.

10 JULY
Disability Awareness day
All-day event in Warrington. RCN Cheshire West branch is supporting the North West board at this event.

14 JULY
RCN Cheshire East branch
Meeting from 19.00-21.00 in Room F37, Pinewoods building, Stepping Hill Hospital. Any queries, call branch secretary Anne Duggart on 07390 101862.

15 JULY
RCN HCAI conference and exhibition
Thinking differently – infection prevention in the new health care landscape. At Manchester Conference Centre, Manchester. Cost: RCN members £40. Details from Laura at infectionprevention@rcn.org.uk

Eastern

16 JUNE
RCN Essex county conference (branch meeting)

21 JUNE
RCN Cambridgeshire county conference (branch meeting)
At Wood Green Animal Shelter. Call Linsey Byrne on 01284 717772.

30 JUNE
RCN Norfolk county conference (branch meeting)
At Somerton Room, Marriott Centre, Hellesdon, Norwich. Contact Karen Edwards on 01263 717771.

East of England Paediatric Ambulatory Care Network meeting
At Red Lodge Millennium Centre, Newmarket IP28 8TT. Please email child.network @oeo.nhs.uk for details.

4 JULY
Nurses in commissioning: current and future health and social needs in Cambridgeshire
At Wood GreenAnimal Shelter, London Road, Godmanchester, Cambs PE29 2HN, from 12.00-17.00. To book a place, contact 01284 717712 or linseybyme @rcn.org.uk

5 JULY
CPD workshop for activists on managing ill health
At RCN HQ, 20 Cavendish Square, London W1. For more details call Carole Vincent on 020 7284 71723.

7 JULY
The last days of life
We only get one chance to make a difference to those we care for who are dying and for the memories of those who are left behind. From 09.30-16.30 at St Francis Hospice, Romford, Essex. Email education @sfh.org.uk or visit www.sfh.org.uk

18 JULY
Study day – innovations in motor neurone disease
Discussion on the common issues associated with this disease. From 09.30-16.30 at St Francis Hospice, Romford, Essex. Please email education @sfh.org.uk or visit the website at www.sfh.org.uk

West Midlands

Go to www.rcn.org.uk/westmidlands for more regional events

22 JUNE
Preventing pressure ulcers – your legal responsibilities
Workshop hosted by RCN South Birmingham branch at Priory Hospital Training Building, 225A Bristol Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B5 7UB, from 13.30-14.45. To book, call 021 450 4304 or email julia.thomas @rcn.org.uk

29 JUNE
RCN South Staffordshire branch meeting and development event
Diversity and Equality in Care – The Equalities Act and you. At the Ben Bowden Room, Medical Education Centre, Queen’s Hospital, Belvedere Road, Burton-upon-Trent, Staffs DE13 0RB at 14.30. To book a place please email diane.minnis @rcn.org.uk or call her on 0121 454 4326.

5 JULY
RCN Worcestershire branch
An educational event open to all nurses. All events are held at 19:30 in the Charles Hastings Education Centre, Worcestershire Royal Hospital, Newtown Road, Worcester WR5 1DD.

20 JULY
RCN South Birmingham branch meeting and development event
Don’t mention the F word! Staying safe, preventing falls. At the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital, Lecture Theatre, Bristol Road, Northfield at 14:00. Cost: free to RCN members, £25 to non-members. Please email julia.thomas @rcn.org.uk or call 0121 454 4304 to book a place.

27 JULY
RCN Shropshire branch meeting and development event
It’s all about balance – keeping nourished and managing obesity. At the William Farr House, Myton Oak Road, Shrewsbury at 15.00. Please email audrey.bergan @rcn.org.uk or call 01743 254 4302 to book a place.

RCN South Staffordshire branch meeting and development event
Stepping up to the plate – your role as a leader. This event will include attitudes, behaviours, treating people with dignity and changing. At the Learning Centre, St George’s Hospital, Stafford Education Centre, from 15.00-18.00. To book a place please email diane.minnis @rcn.org.uk or call 0121 454 4326.

East Midlands

16 JUNE
Student information network
RCN East Midlands office, 9th Floor, Castle Heights, 72 Maid Marian Way, Nottingham NG5 6BJ, from 14.00-16.00. This event is open to all student members.

22 JUNE
HCA study day
Fees event for health care assistants hosted by the RCN Leicestershire branch, including lunch. Innovation Centre, Charnwood Mill, Barrow-uponSoar, Leicestershire, from 10:00-16:00. To book a place, please call Jean Thornton on 0116 258 4756 or email jean.thornton @uhlt-tc.nhs.uk

RCN Nottingham branch
Study day aimed at tackling issues including the Mental Capacity Act, substance misuse and safeguarding. To book a place please contact Gill Cort at gill.cort @nuh.nhs.uk or text 07666 923727 by 14 June.

4 JULY
RCN Derbyshire branch
Branch meeting at the NHS Walk-in Centre, London Road Community Hospital site, Osmaston Road, Derby, from 19:00. All members welcome. Further details are available from roger.milligan @nhs.net

12 JULY
RCN North Lincolnshire branch
Meeting from 19:00 in the Oakes Room at Skegness Hospital. Details from rcn @mattdotcom.org.uk

East Midlands Epilepsy Interest Group
From 17:45-20:00 at the Postgraduate Education Centre, QMC. Call 0115 924 9924, ext 63284. 27 JULY
RCN Nottingham branch
Meeting at Sherwood Hall, Nottingham City Hospital campus, from 17:45. Entry via Gate 3 off Hucknall Road. For further details, please email gill.cort @nuh.nhs.uk

9 AUGUST
Equality, diversity and human rights network
RCN East Midlands office, 9th Floor, Castle Heights, 72 Maid Marian Way, Nottingham NG5 6BJ from 10:00-12:00. Open to members interested in equality and diversity issues.

1 SEPTEMBER
HCA network meeting
RCN East Midlands office, 9th Floor, Castle Heights, 72 Maid Marian Way, Nottingham NG5 6BJ, from 10:00-12:00. Forum for HCA members to network and share experiences.