

## RCN Forum Annual Report 2024

### **Forum Name:**

Older People's Forum

### **Introduction:**

The Older People's Forum supports RCN members working with older people in all care settings and in any speciality. Our members have a broad spectrum of roles in health and social care including acute, community and care home settings. As a forum, we want to ensure that the voice of older people continues to be at the centre of everything we do.

### **Membership of the forum**

The Older People's Forum has a total of 11,423 members. The forum began 2024 under the leadership of co- chair's (Gary Mitchell & Stephanie Craig) who were co- elected to the position unopposed in 2023, with Gary continuing in the role from 2022. Through 2024, the Older People's Forum received resignations from two of their six committee members. The two members departed in October 2024 and November 2024.

In Autumn 2024, the Older People's Forum advertised 1 vacancy. 13 applicants applied for these vacancies and 3 were shortlisted. One committee member was re- elected to the forum for another term. Due to the two resignations, we hope to appoint our 2 shortlisted candidates to these 2 additional roles, who will work alongside current committee members.

In October 2024, the role of deputy- chair was also advertised and Jo Roche was appointed to this role and will commence in January 2025.

### **Reflections on 2024: (Outputs and outcomes)**

The strategy for 2024 was similar to 2023 and had a primary focus on recovery as the speciality of older people's nursing was significantly impacted during the pandemic, which has influenced output from the Forum. The work plan remains committed to support older people's services across a health and social care landscape:

- The forum sent an email to all members requesting their input on what they hoped to gain from the committee and the forum. Based on this feedback, a series of webinars was developed. The first webinar, focusing on Delirium, was hosted in October. It was fully booked and received outstanding evaluations. The webinar is available for re-watching on the forum's webpage.
- Following suggestions from the wider forum membership, the forum committee submitted an FFG bid to host a conference at RCN HQ to mark International Older People's Day. Unfortunately, the bid was not successful.
- The podcasts from 2023 are now complete. All episodes are ready for publication, with one podcast live on the website, and the remaining two are pending upload.
- At Congress 2024, the forum participated in two health and wellbeing activities, including one co-hosted with the Trauma and Orthopaedic Nursing Forum. The forum also supported a program for health care support workers.

Additionally, it seconded a resolution submitted by the Pain and Palliative Care Forum, advocating for legal amendments to improve access to controlled drugs in care homes. The resolution was successful and received support at Congress.

- Throughout the year, the forum emphasised blogging, resulting in 15 blogs published in 2024. These are available on the forum's website. Additional blogs are lined up for publication over the coming weeks.
- On social media, our closed Facebook group has grown to over 1,100 members. Our X (formerly Twitter) account also saw growth, reaching 2,157 followers. However, the account is now inactive due to RCN's decision to withdraw from the platform.
- The committee has worked closely with the professional lead to update the SPACE principles.
- Updates to the Delirium Champion resources are underway and are scheduled for publication in 2024.
- Updates to the Care Home Journey resources are completed and published.
- The committee also contributed to the publication of Adult Safeguarding: Roles and Competencies for Health Care Staff: Second Edition in August

### **RCN Representation**

- The Older People's Forum participated in the RCN Wales Dementia Conference, presenting the Dementia Care SPACE Principles. Jo Roche represented the forum at this event.
- The Older People's Forum was also represented at the Conference for the Independent Sector in the Northern, Yorkshire, and Humberside Region, held in October to mark International Older Persons Day. Sandra Blade represented the forum at this event.

### **Contribution to Consultations/Policy development**

- The committee contributed to the publication of the Adult Safeguarding: Roles and Competencies for Health Care Staff: Second edition published in August 2024 which has received good initial feedback.

### **Plans for 2023:**

Deliverables for 2024 include:

1. A series of webinars to profile older people's conditions from a 4 country perspective (topics recommended by members)
2. Continue with a series of blogs from committee and forum members.
3. Future collaboration with other forums to develop guidelines and resources for members.

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**By: Gary Mitchell & Stephanie Craig (Co-Chairs of Older People's Forum)**