



Royal College
of Nursing

REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2023





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WELCOME

Over the course of a year, the RCN supports its half a million members to provide expert care to many more millions of people. The pace of our work can mean it is easy to overlook what we've achieved in the last 12 months. This annual review is a chance to reflect on our successes and feel inspired to continue our vital work. It's an opportunity to remind ourselves of the value we add to our members and the wider nursing community.

2023 was an incredibly busy and professionally challenging year, leading historic strike action and navigating internal governance and culture changes. It was unprecedented on many levels. Thousands of nursing staff went on strike as part of our *Fair Pay for Nursing* campaign – we stood together on picket lines to fight for the fair pay and recognition that nursing deserves. To every one of you who took part, whether by picketing, voting or encouraging others, thank you. We have so much to be proud of. The increase in public awareness and support for the profession is testament to your hard work.

However, this review is also a chance for us to consider what we've learned, to think about what we'd do differently, and lay the foundations for discussions around what needs to change to drive success going forward.

While much of our attention was necessarily focussed on valuing nursing and fair pay, other important work continued. 2023 saw the launch of our new 5-year strategic plan. Leading with 4 goals, our strategy sets out our ambition to strengthen our College, deliver for our members and the nursing profession, and give our staff the very best experience of work. The plan is a commitment to build upon your incredible efforts and amplify the voice of nursing even further.

We also renewed our commitment to professional development, through the creation of the new RCN Institute of Nursing Excellence. The 5 academies which make up the Institute will improve what we do and allow us to take advantage of new opportunities.

Your passions and concerns were shared at another incredible Congress. I was proud to see so many of you committed to influencing the work of the College and telling us what issues you want to address. You can see how this work was taken forward in our Council's Report to Members on page 39.

Nursing is complex and safety-critical work. Without the standards we insist on, care can be compromised and patients can suffer. Following our safe staffing summit last December, we have been working hard to lay the groundwork for our campaign for safety-critical nurse-to-patient ratios.

Our fight for fair pay and for the nursing profession to be truly valued also continues. We will use our voice to hold the UK government and devolved governments to account on the commitments they've made to address the staffing crisis with proper responsibility and accountability.

The challenges we face are not easy, but the commitment and passion of our members inspires us to be unrelenting in our pursuit of better pay, terms and conditions for the nursing workforce and better care for our patients. You are at the centre of every decision we make, and this review is a clear demonstration of the work you helped us achieve in 2023. I am incredibly proud of what we have accomplished in the last year and have no doubt that there will be much more for us to be proud of in the year ahead.



Professor Pat Cullen
General Secretary
and Chief Executive

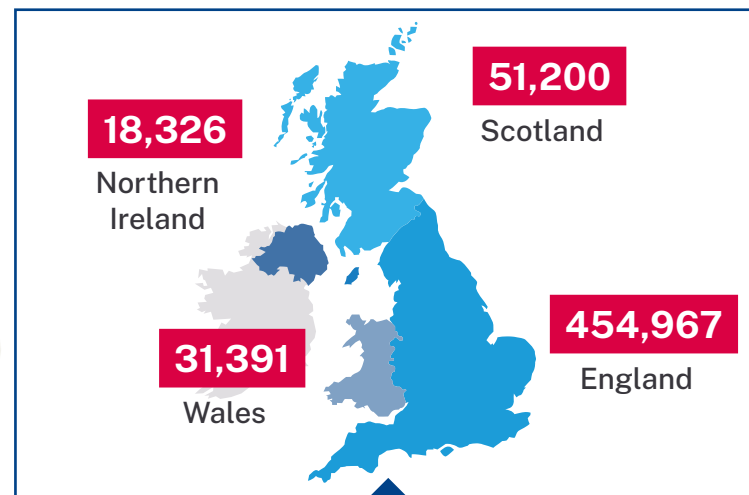


Sheilabye (Sheila)
Sobrany
President



OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

OVERALL MEMBERSHIP OF OVER 550,000



MEMBERSHIP BY REGION

481,129

Registered nurse



33,776

Student

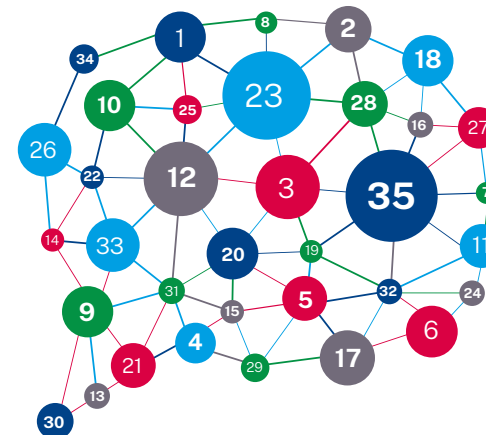


41,377

Nursing support worker



FORUM MEMBERSHIP



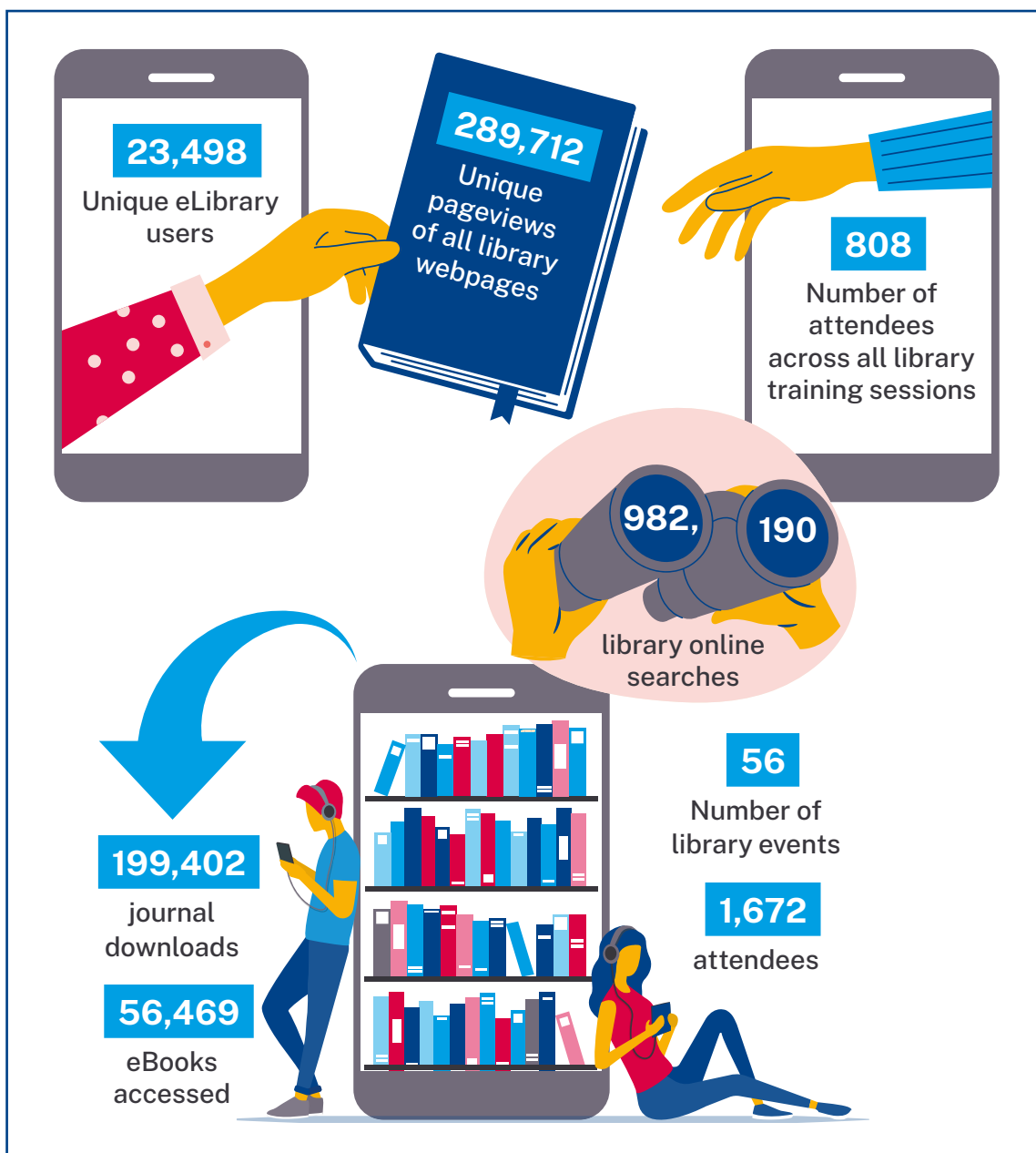
35

Forums

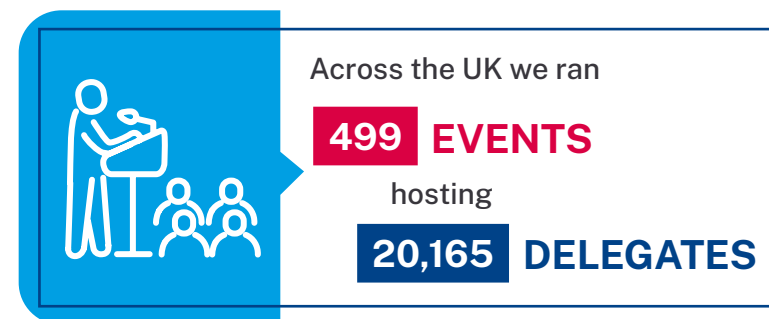
113,619

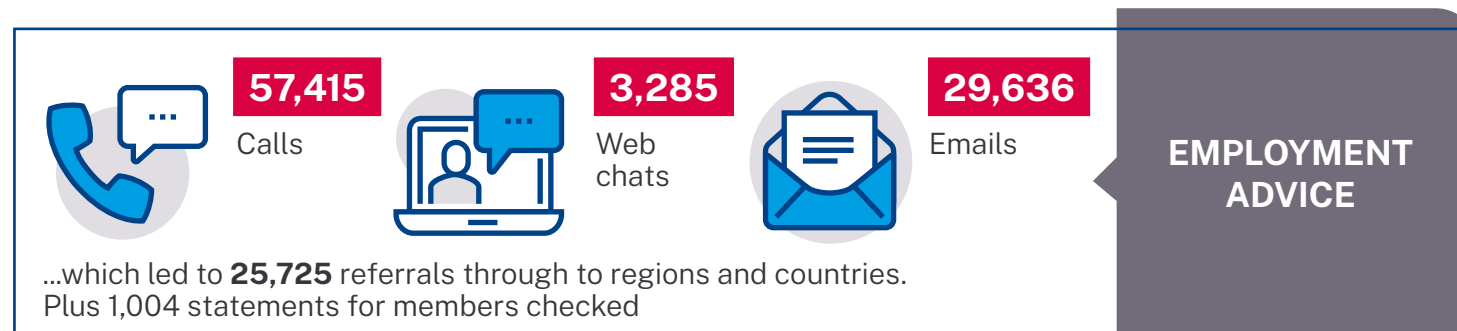
Members

See page 36 for details of our forum membership

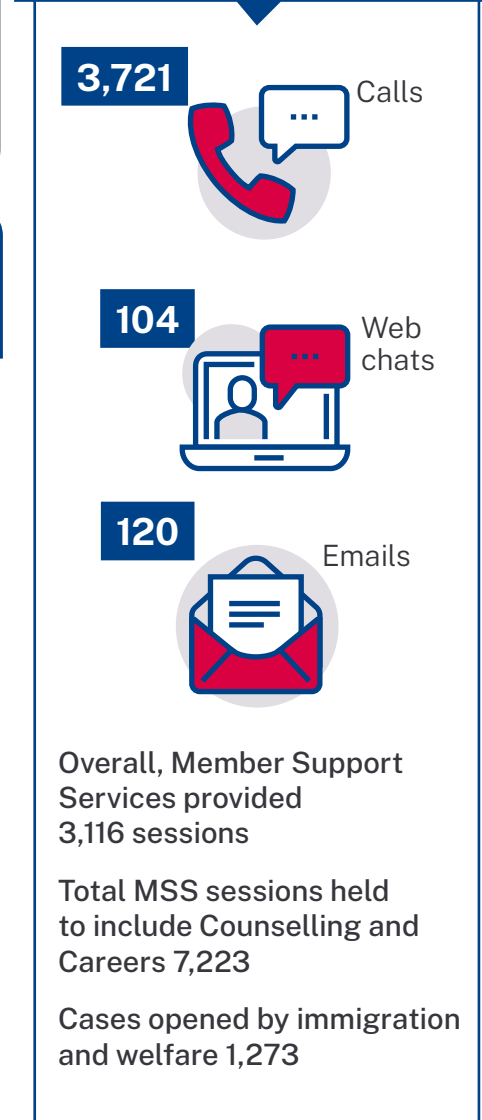


RCN CONGRESS '23
DEBATES • LEARNING • EXHIBITION

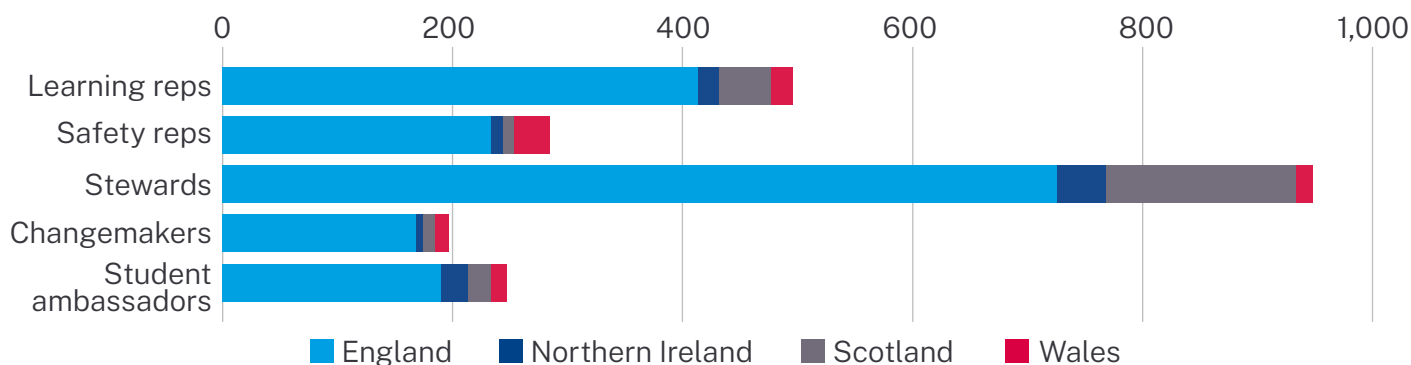




MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT



Reps across the UK (Includes those on the pathway and working towards accreditation)



Total reps: 1,798

RCN staff and stewards across the UK managed approximately **2,300** cases

LEGAL

£4.3m

Recovered in compensation for members by our in-house legal team

(the figure recovered in respect of personal injury claims by our agent solicitors and RCN Law)

£2.03m

Recovered for members by our in-house employment legal team



1,475

fitness to practice referrals dealt with by the in-house regulatory legal team

4,299

referrals

21

Employment Tribunal claims submitted

In the UK, in the final quarter of 2022, our Fair Pay for Nursing campaign was covered in:



6,807

counselling sessions were provided



plus 124 trauma therapy sessions

4,889

orders for Fair Pay for Nursing campaign materials

136,380

products despatched



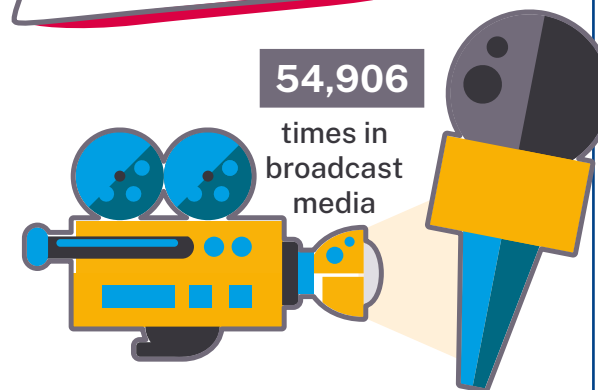
74 publications added to the RCN website

19 of these were clinical publications

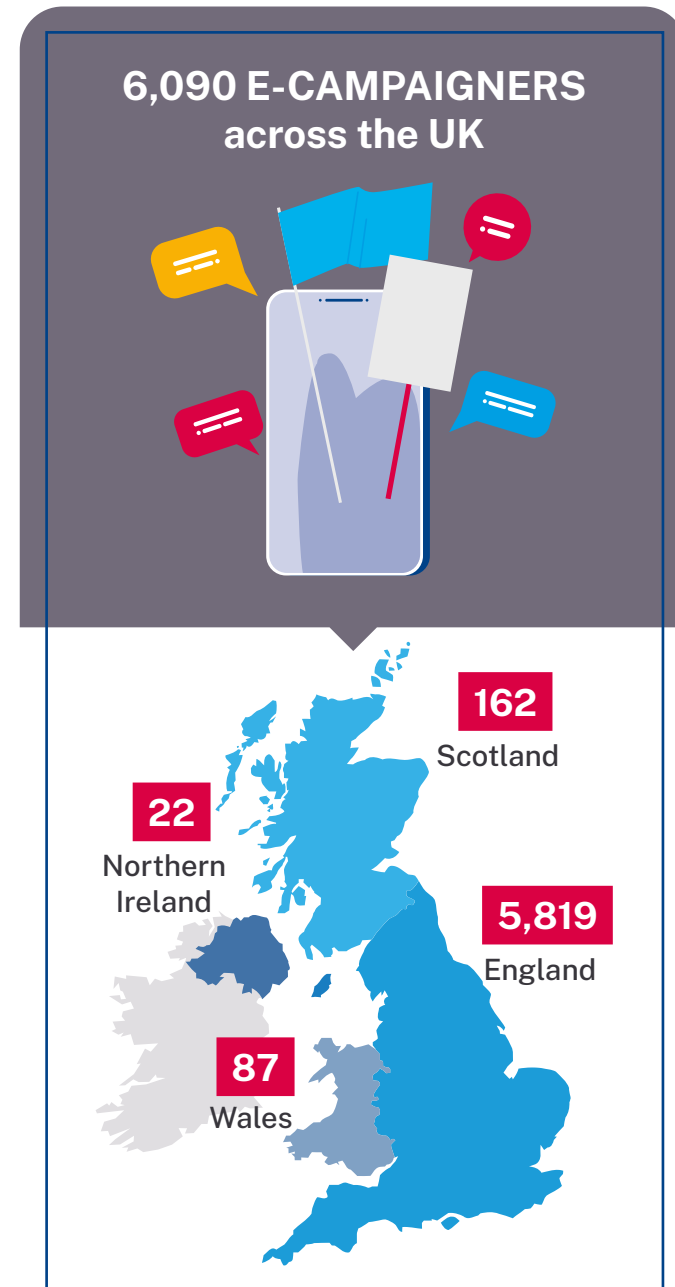
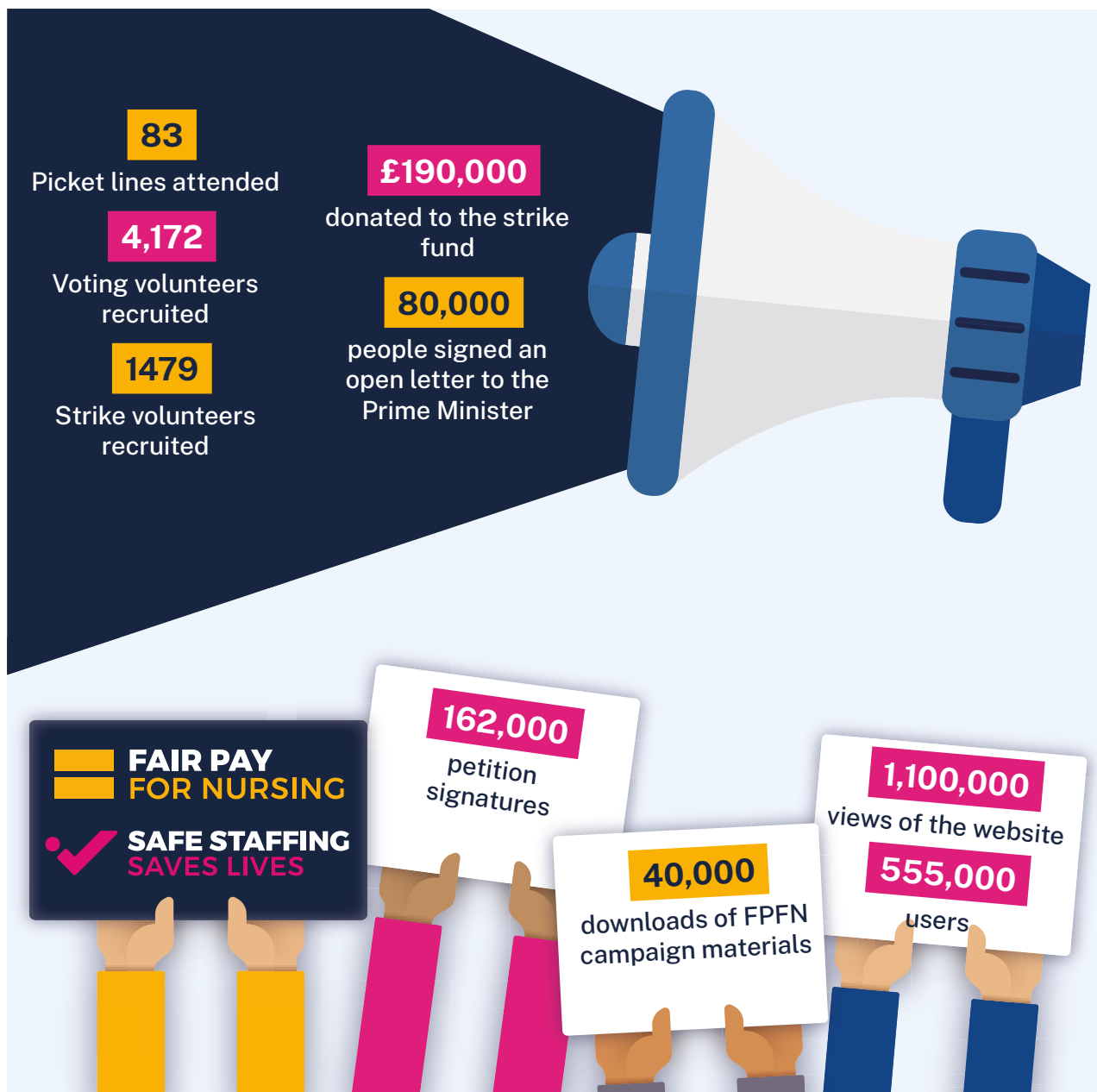


54,906

times in broadcast media



MEDIA





OUR GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR 2023

Introduction

In May 2023, at Congress, we launched ***A new dawn for nursing: Five-year strategic plan 2023-2027*** to inspire, champion and support the nursing community to deliver the best possible care.

The plan outlines our vision for the coming years and will be delivered through 4 goals and underlying priority areas:

1. The RCN as the voice of nursing

- 1.1. The RCN is the leading national and international authority in representing the nursing profession, both in its activities as a Royal College and trade union.
- 1.2. The RCN is the leading national authority on education for the nursing profession.
- 1.3. The RCN successfully influences public policy in matters affecting nursing across all 4 countries of the UK and internationally.

2. The RCN has an engaged, thriving and diverse membership

- 2.1. The RCN represents the diversity of its membership.
- 2.2. The RCN membership is central to Royal College and trade union activities.
- 2.3. The RCN has an active and visible representatives network and professional forums across all sectors.

3. The RCN has a sustainable and viable business model

- 3.1. The RCN will have an engaged workforce motivated by having the best possible experience of work.
- 3.2. The RCN will transform its ways of working to be an adaptable and proactive organisation.

- 3.3. The RCN will expand non-membership income to reduce the overall reliance on membership income.
- 3.4. The RCN will have the financial resources, to systems and infrastructure maintain the sustainability and viability of the RCN.

4. The RCN's governance and positive culture underpins the delivery of the RCN 5-year strategic plan

- 4.1. The RCN will live its mission, vision, values and core behaviours.
- 4.2. The RCN will have effective and inclusive governance.
- 4.3. A coordinating function which ensures that change initiatives add value and are delivered consistently.

Our *Group annual report 2023*, due to be published later in June, provides more detail on our work towards achieving these goals.



[Click here](#) to view the full strategic plan





OUR ENGAGED MEMBERSHIP

Our engaged members

As at 31 December 2023, our membership had increased by a remarkable 5.7% on the previous 12 months. This growth can be attributed primarily to participation in the 2023 industrial action, attracting new members keen to engage in this work.

We also saw an increase in membership of internationally educated members. Registered nurses who had trained in mainland Europe increased by 0.7%, while those who trained elsewhere increased by 26.5%. This was reflected in the numbers of nurses and dual registrants (midwives) on the NMC register – up from 722,669 in September 2022 to 754,954 in September 2023 (a 4.5% increase).

To support our new internationally educated members, during 2023 we hosted 8 webinars, attracting 385 real-time viewers and over 1,700 YouTube views of the recordings.

Number of internationally educated health care staff in the UK in RCN membership (fully paid) as at 31 December 2023, compared to 31 December 2022.

	Educated in Europe	Educated outside Europe
Students	-100%	No change
Nursing support workers	-46.2%	-37.6%
Registered nurses	+0.7%	+26.5%
Registered nurses and midwives on the NMC register	-2.2%	+20.7%
Overall RCN membership	+0.7%	+26.4%

Engagement via email

During 2023, we sent more than 1,500 email campaigns. That's a 60% increase compared to 2022 – and reflects the strike action in England, Northern Ireland and Wales at the beginning of the year, ballots across the NHS and independent sector, pay offer votes and survey launches throughout the year.

60,353 members opened more than 100 emails in 2023 – a 93% increase on the 2022 figure, clearly showing an increasingly engaged pool of members. The analysis of emails opened also showed that we have 336,000 members opening more than 10 emails a year. Even though we're sending more emails, it shows they're engaging and timely.

We are also reporting an 8% decrease in people unsubscribing from our essential information emails as well as a 6% increase in the number of clicks through to content after opening an email.

Transforming our governance and culture

In 2021, we commissioned 2 independent reviews into the governance and culture of our College. Their aim was to spot and address cultural and organisational issues holding us back from being the truly representative and trusted organisation our members and staff deserve.

Recommendations from these reviews were carefully analysed with an action plan for change spanning a number of years. That change covers aspects of how we operate, including our structures, our decision making, our elections and how we represent and communicate with our members. Significant progress was made in 2023.

We developed a detailed plan and a dedicated project team has been put in place to support us to deliver the necessary changes. A joint partnership board of members and staff meets regularly to oversee the work, provide leadership and unblock any challenges.

We've taken care to embed all the recommendations in the RCN's 5-Year Strategic Plan 2023 –2027 and we're committed to delivering them by the end of 2027. We recognise that achieving true cultural change takes time, but we are putting all the building blocks in place to enable real transformation.

What we are delivering

Congress

Our aim is to provide more support for members and staff at RCN Congress—and improve our processes to ensure all voices are heard. Progress so far includes:

- conclusion of investigations into alleged sexual misconduct at Congress
- introduction of:
 - new policies, Safety and Conduct at RCN Events and Code of Conduct for RCN Events, that set out the approach to this specifically in relation to events, including RCN Congress
 - a wellbeing hub at Congress, offering a safe space, where delegates can talk to members of RCN staff
 - a quiet/prayer room and access to mental health first aiders, and a qualified counsellor at Congress.
- increased number of first-time Congress attendees and attendees from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds.

Coming up

As a result of the audit of voting arrangements at Congress, we will introduce new processes to ensure a wider range of members' voices can be heard, including making the process for submitting agenda items more accessible.

Culture, training and development

Our aim is to create a culture of learning and trust, where members and staff are encouraged to speak up and are supported when they do. Progress so far includes:

- the introduction of a rolling programme of development for Council and elected members – including financial governance training and training on fiduciary duties has been delivered to RCN Council
- implementation of a new whistle-blowing policy for members.

Coming up

Our People and Organisational Development department is planning a programme to address culture across the organisation, encompassing our values, how we work with each other and a review of the Respect Charter.

Equity, diversity and inclusion

Our aim is to ensure all members and staff are treated fairly and given equity of opportunity. We want to be genuinely representative, offering parity and access to influence across our diverse membership. Progress so far includes:

- launch of our new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee and the development of member EDI networks and EDI strategy
- a commitment to further internal and external EDI resource across the RCN
- the use of improved language to promote our elections, to actively invite a more diverse pool of candidates
- the goal of encouraging a wider range of people – including Black, Asian, other minority ethnic, female and disabled nursing staff – to take up representative and governance positions.

Governance

Our aim is to achieve excellent governance within our large and complex organisation to provide clarity, transparency and accountability in all that we do. Progress so far includes:

- launch of our 5-Year strategic plan
- the threshold required to call an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) was changed from 1,000 members to 5% of the total RCN membership
- introduction of a buddying system for new members of RCN Council and appraisals for chairs and vice-chairs of all RCN committees
- updating the terms of reference for 9 of our governance committees to clarify their roles and responsibilities
- updating 6 templates for our governance meetings to improve efficiency and clarity
- improving the length and frequency of meetings for RCN Council, our Standing and Representative Committees and our Boards.

Coming up

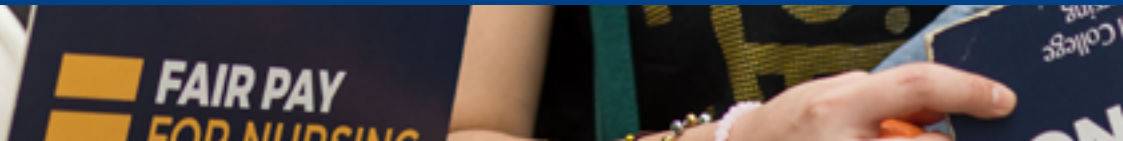
- Council will provide members with a new platform where EGM requests can be hosted and voted on securely.
- A new process that lets members propose agenda items for Council meetings has been developed and is being tested and reviewed.
- We are developing formal reporting processes between our country and regional boards and RCN Council.
- We will review the role descriptors for our senior roles, including the RCN President and Chair of Council.



Find out more at: [rcn.org.uk/
transforming-our-culture-and-governance](https://rcn.org.uk/transforming-our-culture-and-governance)



OUR CAMPAIGNS



Fair Pay for Nursing

The first half of 2023 was dominated by our continued fight for fair pay for our members.

In England, we took to picket lines at 55 NHS trusts for 2 days in January and increased that to 73 trusts in February for a further 2-day strike. On 21 February, as a result of our escalating strike action, the UK government agreed to enter into pay negotiations and we paused strike action while talks took place.

These talks resulted in a new pay offer for our members consisting of a one-off payment for the financial year 2022/23 worth between £1,655 and £3,789 and a 5% consolidated pay increase for 2023/24. The offer also included a specific commitment to the RCN to consider a new pay spine exclusively for NHS nursing staff.

We balloted our members in March on whether they wanted to accept or reject the offer. 54% rejected it of the 61% of eligible members who voted. The outcome led to a further strike in late April and a ballot to extend our strike mandate.

Though there was strong appetite for continued strike action amongst those who voted, not enough members turned out to vote to meet the required legal threshold for further strikes. As 8 of the 12 NHS (AfC) health unions accepted the pay offer, it was implemented.

However, with the passage of time, it became apparent that many nursing staff delivering NHS care through non-NHS employers were not going to receive the pay award. We lobbied the government directly, supporting members to raise the issue with their MPs. Our action directly contributed to the NHS pay award being funded for those non-NHS staff employed on NHS terms and conditions.

In Scotland, the year began with our threat of nursing strikes causing the Scottish government to return to negotiations and offering a new, improved pay offer as well as committing to a significant review of the

Agenda for Change pay structure. Members voted to accept the offer with a narrow majority.

In Wales, the RCN's plans for strike action in February were cancelled following a revised pay offer from the Welsh government for an increase of 3% (1.5% consolidated) in addition to the award already made for 2022/23. Members overwhelmingly voted to reject the offer prompting further negotiations and an additional offer, which was again rejected by members. Strike action took place on two consecutive days in June, before the Welsh government made an offer including measures to improve pay for bank shifts, career progression, flexible working and minimising corridor care. This was accepted by members in September and our dispute with the Welsh government ended.

In Northern Ireland, in the absence of a functioning Executive, no such progress was made, though the RCN continued to advocate strongly for its members meeting with the Secretary of State to push the issue. Our members demonstrated outside Stormont in May and more than 1,000 wrote to their Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), calling for the Executive to return and act on public sector pay.



Throughout the year, the UK government continued its attempts to limit the freedoms of nursing staff to take strike action. It introduced the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill in early 2023 and succeeded in getting it passed through parliament in July. This was despite the lobbying efforts of the RCN, which included enabling 8,000 people across England, Scotland and Wales to write to their MP to oppose the legislation.

Not just the NHS

It wasn't just our NHS members who we fought for. Strike action was also carried out in the Isle of Man by employees of Manx Care, resulting in repeatedly improved pay offers which RCN members ultimately accepted. At Care Plus Group, a social enterprise delivering NHS care, we undertook extensive strike action to try to win improved pay for members in line with the pay award offered to NHS staff.

Nursing staff working in general practice in England have also received our support. A 6% pay increase was agreed by the government in July 2023, and despite this promise, full funding of this award was not made available. We launched a survey of general practice nursing (GPN) members to understand how much of the pay increase had been received in November 2023.

Following this work, we have surveyed our general practice nursing members and hosted webinars for them. We will use this information to campaign and represent this group in the future.

Job evaluation

Following a review of nursing staff roles at bands 2 and 3, it became apparent that many band 2 nursing staff were missing out on pay that they deserve. We are working across regions the UK to support members – on all bands – to ensure that they are paid fairly for the job they do, and the skills and experience they have.

Impact of strike action

Historic strike action took place at over 150 employers across England and Wales. Engagement across all social media platforms increased dramatically during this period and membership grew as the workforce appetite for action increased.

Across social media, the hashtag #FairPayForNursing was mentioned 96,000 times and #RCNStrike 56,000 times.

Our *Fair Pay for Nursing* and industrial action social media content generated 386,000 engagements and over 51,000 original posts.

The RCN strike fund donation tool was launched in 2022. During 2023, it raised £100,000 which was used to support payment of strike benefit to RCN members who took industrial action.



Safe Staffing Saves Lives

As members took to picket lines in their fight for fair pay, they talked passionately about the related issue of short staffing and its impact on patient safety. It was clear they were taking a stand to advocate for their patients and fight for the future of the NHS.

Media coverage of the strikes focused not only on nursing pay, but the intrinsically linked issue of chronic nursing workforce shortages. Low pay was shown to be a factor forcing nursing staff to leave the profession and discourage people from applying to study nursing. UCAS figures for 2023 showed a 13% fall in the number of applicants to nursing courses across the UK.

At Congress 2023, RCN General Secretary and Chief Executive Professor Pat Cullen promised that the College would firmly put its stake in the ground and campaign for safe nurse-to-patient ratios. She stressed that we need staffing levels that safeguard quality of nursing care and the wellbeing of nursing professionals. She said: “It needs putting in law who is accountable for the planning, all the gaps and the harm to patients. It can never be the individual nurse when you are simply set up to fail.”

Pat was also clear that it is England and Westminster where politicians have continued to strongly resist our campaigning on safe staffing. At that point, RCN Wales members had already forced pioneering new legislation, the first of its kind in Europe, to be adopted in Wales and in 2023 we published a progress report on the impact it's had. We made clear that the current legislation doesn't go far enough and must be extended to community settings and inpatient mental health units. We also stipulated that non-compliance with the legislation must be met with explicit consequences.

In Scotland, RCN members forced the government to announce a timetable for the implementation of its safe staffing legislation at Congress the previous year. In 2023, as a direct result of member campaigning, we secured a ministerial led Nursing and Midwifery

taskforce. We demanded that the work of the taskforce be informed by the views and experiences of nursing staff and that it develops funded and ambitious recommendations to tackle the chronic nursing workforce shortages, blighting the delivery of quality of care. We called for the bill to be paused in February and insisted the Scottish government take urgent action to address the challenges facing social care rather than wait until the creation of a National Care Service.

In Northern Ireland, the political impasse continued to frustrate our members and in May they held a demonstration outside Stormont to voice their anger about the escalating crisis in health and social care. RCN Northern Ireland Director Rita Devlin said: “We have almost 3,000 unfilled nursing posts in the HSC and a similar number in the independent sector. Measures to address this, such as through safe staffing legislation, are not being progressed because of the absence of government.” Returning to, and implementing, the staffing agreement in Northern Ireland was our first ask of Stormont when the government reformed in early 2024.

In England, the NHS launched its long-term workforce plan in June 2023; a significant document in addressing the recruitment and retention crisis that so critically impinges on day-to-day staffing numbers. Unfortunately, we were left with serious concerns about how realistic the plan is without proper investment in the existing nursing workforce and more financial support for those seeking to join the profession. It didn't provide detail on how nursing staff numbers would be increased and although it sets out intended outcomes for recruitment, retention and reform, there were no specific actions or funding.

In summer 2023 we commissioned nursing policy expert Professor James Buchan to investigate the impact of nurse-to-patient ratios legislation in other countries. This work was presented at the first of our safe staffing summits held in December 2023, where we also heard from other global nursing workforce experts.

Meanwhile, during 2023, we did everything in our power to encourage employers to proactively embed safe staffing levels into their structures, continuing to advocate for this through our **Nursing workforce standards**. Throughout the year we ran webinars, recruited champions and equipped members with new resources to use the standards in their workplaces – influencing staffing design to promote better outcomes for staff and for patients.

Below: Professor Pat Cullen, General Secretary and Chief Executive at Congress 2023



Nurses' Day



Friday 12 May 2023 saw our members across the UK celebrate Nurses' Day. We showcased the remarkable work of our members and gave members, patients and the public the opportunity to say thank you. We also demonstrated to everyone the difference that nursing makes to them, their friends and family and raised awareness of the realities of nursing in 2023.

Our Nurses' Day film featured 5 case studies of registered nurses working across a number of specialties, locations and environments. The individual case studies were shared across social media and received over 331,000 views with 10,000 people commenting on them.

Other activity for Nurses' Day included:

- a dedicated Nurses' Day webpage – rcn.org.uk/nursesday which was viewed over 40,000 times
- a stakeholder resource page (for downloadable graphics and posters)
- emails to members in the lead up and on the day
- free badges and enamel badges made available for sale through the online RCN Shop
- sharing member news stories via the online RCN Magazine
- messaging to staff on our intranet
- sharing of members celebrating on social media
- a video from RCN elected members, thanking nursing staff from across the UK.

ON SOCIAL MEDIA WE ACHIEVED:

667,470 impressions



24,463 engagements



an engagement rate of

3.66%

Nursing Support Workers' Day



Throughout the year, we highlighted the significant contributions of nursing support workers (NSWs) to health and social care. Thursday 23 November was Nursing Support Workers' Day and our focus was to showcase the work of these members.

A key highlight was the production of the NSW Day film, featuring 5 case studies from members working in hospitals, in the community, in forensics and the armed forces. Following the success of the Nurses' Day video earlier in the year, we adopted the same

approach and split the film into 5 short films.

In addition to social media posts in the run up to and on the day, other activity for NSW Day included:

- a dedicated NSW Day webpage: rcn.org.uk/NursingSupportWorkersDay and stakeholder resource page
- sharing content from members celebrating the day along with member news stories
- sharing a video from our NSW Committee members
- sending emails to members
- a series of magazine pieces featuring NSWs
- an interview in the *Nursing Times* with RCN Professional Lead for NSWs Ofrah Muflahi
- production of 32,000 free badges, with enamel badges available for sale online at the RCN Shop
- promotion to staff via the intranet.

On the day itself, we also hosted the inaugural Nursing Support Worker Day Conference in London.

Our hashtag, **#NursingSupportWorkersDay** trended at number 7 on X (Twitter) on the day.

ON SOCIAL MEDIA WE ACHIEVED:

257,000 impressions



5,600 engagements



an engagement rate of

4%

Pride

Pride events take place across the UK between May and September each year. We use this opportunity to promote existing materials, resources and digital assets to support the visibility of our LGBTQ+ members (and supporters) within the College, including the Pride in Nursing webpage which acts as an information hub and virtual community.

Our webpage was updated in 2023 and we used social media to share relevant magazine articles, downloadable content, Instagram stickers, and RCN resources throughout Pride season. We also used this platform to host details of the local Pride events which we were involved in up and down the country, including UK Black Pride in London and Transgender Pride in Brighton.

Professor Pat Cullen, General Secretary and Chief Executive of the RCN, also sent a video message to members and staff.



ON SOCIAL MEDIA WE ACHIEVED:

304,000 impressions

8,300 engagements



an engagement rate of

2.7%





OUR EVENTS

Introduction

Our Events Team hosted 17 events during 2023. These included RCN Congress, our AGM, multi-day education and research conferences and a range of forum-led events, as well as our Joint Reps conferences.

Our regional and country teams also host many events throughout the year. In 2023, they held a combined total of 428 events, which included:

- accountability and delegation
- celebrating learning disability nursing
- leadership for the independent sector
- library outreach events
- *Fair Pay for Nursing* webinars
- roundtable events with key political stakeholders
- student to registered nurse event
- introduction to Parkinson's
- plus Nurse of the Year events in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Collectively these events attracted 20,165 delegates.

Joint Reps conferences

Our Joint Reps events took place in both the spring and autumn of 2023. These conferences bring reps together for learning, support and networking, and to update reps on new resources and activity within the organisation.

The spring conference was held in March 2023 in Leeds with a theme of 'The union is its members: improving nursing for everyone'. There were 46 first-time attendees.

In October, we held the conference in Liverpool with a theme of 'Winning in our workplaces: building foundations for change'. There were 59 first-time attendees.

See page 33 for more information about our reps.

Education Forum conference

This was held in Birmingham in April 2023, attracting 380 delegates and a lengthy waiting list. The sell-out event provided an invaluable opportunity for delegates to discuss, debate and celebrate the latest nursing developments and innovations in nursing education, as well as the chance to network with old friends and new. The call for abstracts attracted almost 200 submissions (an increase of 57% on 2022). Approximately 100 of the highest scoring abstracts were accepted for presentation. The conference also saw an increase in the number of sponsor-led seminars and sold out on exhibition space, revenue from which supports this ongoing programme of work.

See page 35 for more information about the work of our forums.

Annual general meeting (AGM)

Our 95th Ordinary General Meeting was held on Monday 10 July 2023 as a hybrid meeting, both in Manchester and online. It was chaired by our President Sheilabye Sobrany. Sheilabye reflected on the financial year of January 2022 – December 2022 and our Honorary Treasurer, Carol Webley-Brown, presented the 2022 financial statements.

Paul Vaughan, Vice Chair of Council spoke of our 5-year strategy, ensuring joint delivery on transformation of the professional union and the sound finances of the College that allowed for continued support of members and future growth too.

Further to the Bruce Carr and KPMG reports, which made clear recommendations for the improvement in governance and behaviour for Council to improve the RCN, Paul outlined some of the progress made so far.

Our members then voted on 3 resolutions; all of which were passed.

The first resolution was to extend current RCN Council members' terms of office for 1 year. So those whose term of office was due to expire on 31 December 2023 have now had their terms extended until 31 December 2024. This is to ensure continued stability, allow current Council members to progress work resulting from the Carr and KPMG reviews, deliver the 5-year strategy and avoid an additional set of expensive statutory postal election costs. The resolution was passed with 82.46% of members who voted supporting the resolution.

The second resolution passed was to allow Council to set subscription rates for a further 5 years to help ensure the financial stability of the organisation. This resolution was passed with 74.83% of members who voted supporting the resolution.

The third resolution related to the number of RCN members needed to call an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM), how requests for EGMs are submitted and verified, and how member resolutions can be submitted to General Meetings which have already been called. From now on, 5% of the total RCN membership will need to support calls for an EGM for it to proceed and a process will be put in place to give members a direct route to submit items and speak to Council at their meetings.

International Research Forum conference

This event took place in September, in Manchester. The overarching conference theme was 'Embedding a culture of research in nursing' and the event attracted sponsorship from all 4 universities in the Greater Manchester area. Abstract submissions for the conference programme were up 98% on the previous year and the event exceeded 400 delegates for the first time since 2016, with many commenting on how much they valued the networking opportunities in the delegate feedback.

Nurse : Patient – The international case for ratios

In December 2023, Professor Nicola Ranger, RCN Chief Nursing Officer, and Deputy General Secretary and Chief Executive, hosted a 2-day summit for senior nurse leaders from across the UK on the need for safety-critical nurse-to-patient ratios. This included presentations from nursing workforce experts on the evidence supporting ratios. Speakers included Professors Linda Aiken, Alison Leary, Jane Ball, Jim Buchan, Howard Catton (CEO of the International Council of Nurses) and Linda Silas (Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions). The event attracted 135 delegates, with the majority being chief nurses. This UK staffing for safe and effective care work will be shared and developed further throughout 2024.



Congress

Our flagship annual event attracted almost 3,500 delegates (including staff and exhibitors) to the Brighton Centre on the south coast of England in May 2023. Our 54th Congress started on Sunday 14 May, with an opening and awards ceremony featuring music from Brighton's Gay Men's Chorus.

Recognising excellence in nursing, we presented the following awards:

- 6 Awards of Merit
- 5 Fellowships
- 4 forum (and forum committee) members
- 6 reps
- 2 students.

The main business of Congress kicked off the following day, running until Thursday afternoon, with 28 debates in the main hall, complemented by 3 keynote speakers:

- Caroline Lucas, Green Party MP for Brighton Pavilion
- Shani Dhanda, disability inclusion specialist
- Professor Pat Cullen, RCN General Secretary and Chief Executive.

Find out more about the the work we have achieved following these debates in the Council's Report to Members starting on [page 40](#).

Our diverse programme included many fringe events, boasting 32 sessions which formed our Learning and Wellbeing Programme, plus 3 lectures, and the World Café. Special receptions for nursing support worker members on Monday and student members on Tuesday, along with country and regional receptions added further opportunities for networking. Throughout the week, guided tours of Brighton took place each evening, culminating in a memorable end of Congress event on Wednesday evening.

The Congress exhibition was full of energy, hosting 44 exhibitors alongside a number of RCN stands. Over a quarter of the paid-for stands were first-time exhibitors at Congress.

We would like to thank LV= for generously sponsoring Congress 2023.





OUR SUPPORT SERVICES

Providing expert advice and support

Legal and Member Relations

Throughout 2023, we provided vital information, guidance and support to our members all over the UK. RCN Direct (RCND) continued to offer help and advice over the telephone and through online channels. Our country, regional, Employment Relations and Legal teams represented members with case work and provided expert assistance where needed.

Across the year, RCND handled 90,336 member contacts across all channels. 42.2% of these were referred to other RCN departments (the relevant country or region, legal, Member Support Services or nursing) for further support. As well as this, the RCND Statement Team checked just over 1,000 statements.

Our Advice Information Co-ordinators continued to triage social media posts relating to our main accounts. In 2023, we handled 201,648 posts in total.

Our 80+ member advice guides continued to be popular, with over 1 million views altogether in 2023. Our most popular guides cover topics such as Agenda for Change, sickness, the duty of care and having a family. The team has worked with colleagues in Employment Relations and Legal to manage a rolling review schedule and ensure the guides had an expert review at least once in 2023.



[View our member advice guides here](#)

Our chatbot, introduced in 2022, handled 22,040 conversations supporting members with finding information online, with 25% of these conversations being handled by the chatbot outside of normal hours.

During the first half of the year, we received high levels of contact on industrial action, with the large majority of these handled by RCND.

Within the second half of 2023, we've seen our top 3 contact areas being:

- disciplinarys
- contractual rights issues
- sickness issues/processes.

Our Employment Relations and regional/country teams provided advice to members on various issues with disciplinary, ill health and contractual issues accounting for over 55% of referrals. These referrals resulted in over 13,500 cases being managed for members of which 2,500 of these were by workplace representatives.

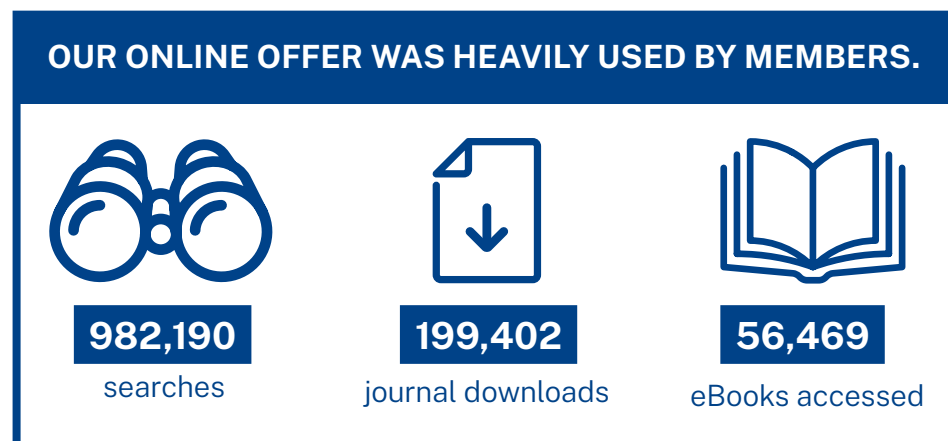
Our Legal Team primarily supported members with NMC/regulatory issues which made up 69% of legal referrals. The other top reasons for legal referrals were for support with criminal/police and coroners/fatal accident inquiry issues.

The Welfare Service continues to support members to successfully claim Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB) despite IIDB still not being recognised as an industrial disease. Welfare have been challenging the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) through mandatory reconsideration providing evidence to prove that long COVID-19 was contracted in the workplace. The process is lengthy but to date, we can report 14 successful outcomes for members, with sums of over £36,000 being awarded to members in some cases and others who have been deemed 100% disabled through long COVID contracted in the workplace.

Counselling experienced a rise in high-risk referrals particularly related to members with suicidal ideation. Our Immigration Services have seen a steep rise in nursing support workers coming through to the service, with contracts and unfair charges being the main issues.

Library and Archives

As the RCN commenced its historic industrial action in 2023 the entire Library and Archive team became involved in this work, contributing over 850 hours of support on picket lines, ward walks, administrating strike committees, and helping provide the evidence base for our action. In addition to the usual RCN committees, the archive team collected records from 129 strike committees from across the UK.



We introduced a virtual reading room, which allows access to our printed collections online and has been used by members across the UK. We launched our evidence search summary service for staff, offering an enhanced literature search with more insights, greater tailoring of results, and synopsis of resources. These have been delivered on a variety of projects including nursing workforce planning, leadership and influencing policy, and registered nurse substitution. We introduced a new staff current awareness service, which provides regular updates on key nursing issues. Our first bulletin was on safe staffing and has had great feedback, so we are planning to extend this offer to our members.

The archives have given significant support to the College's ongoing COVID-19 workstreams. The archives were integral to the RCN's

efforts for both the Scottish and UK COVID-19 Inquiry responses, identifying and processing 118,391 resources to support the legal team. This work will continue in 2024 as the inquiries continue. The team has also contributed to the RCN's Research Society ICON project, adding the interviews collected to our archive. This is an important collection of interviews with senior nurses about their experiences during COVID-19.

The Library and Archive reinstated its outreach work across the UK. The team attended a large number of forum days, continued to enhance our regional contacts programme and attended events to promote the library offer. We attended 49 universities to promote our world-leading service to potential student members, alongside attending the RCN research conference, the education conference and the new RCN Learn conference. We supported RCN Congress with literature searches on all topics, reading lists for each topic, and attended Congress to promote the library to our members.

Our external accreditation programme continued with outstanding results. The archive re-accreditation process was successful and outlined the achievement in moving into the digital space and its sustained development. The panel stated that they 'were pleased to see how integral the archive service is to supporting the RCN's mission and purpose... its proactive response to COVID-19 was evidence of a flexible, responsive service, able to update its operations in response to challenges.' The library successfully re-applied for customer service excellence, achieving an amazing 26 compliance plus results, placing our service in the top of the sector. We were praised for our high levels of customer engagement and the wealth of initiatives and development within the service.


Our Library Events and Exhibitions team launched 2 excellent new temporary exhibitions in collaboration with the RCN History of Nursing Forum. In May, we launched ***Unmasked: real stories of nursing in COVID-19***, which examined the often-unheard stories of nursing through COVID-19, placing it within the context of historic

pandemics. The exhibition contained many poignant and unique items from our recent history including Michael Rosen's patient diaries from his time in ICU and a trowel used by one of our members to garden therapeutically during COVID-19, alongside moving member quotes about their lived experiences. This exhibition was on display in RCN Scotland, following a successful launch event supported by the Archive. In November, we launched ***Once upon a time: a history of children and young people's nursing***. We worked closely with a dozen members through a new volunteering programme to develop and write content and share their stories. The exhibition contains an art installation created by hospital school students who designed their ideal ward and perfect nurse for our displays, which feature alongside a bird-nest hand puppet used by a member with sick children, and practical baby dummies for nurse training. To further develop our historic offer, we have secured funding for a collaborative PhD with Queen Mary University of London to start in 2024, focussed on Black nurses' experiences in the post-war era in Britain.

Our library events programme has had numerous successes. We continued to support the RCN's education offer with more members participating on library teaching than in the previous 3 years, and our Royal Literary Fellowship programme continues to develop our members' writing skills through workshops with published writers. Highlights of our events programme were *Nursing beyond borders, a history of international nursing* event which celebrated the lives and careers of British nurses who worked internationally, the return of the RCN to Open House London with tours again being offered of 20 Cavendish Square; and the launch of *Once upon a time* which brought together children's nursing most senior members.





 **OUR REPS**

Introduction

The RCN's UK-wide community of workplace representatives remain central to winning change for members. 2023 proved to be a busy but effective year for our reps, as they continued to defend members' terms and conditions, advocate for their learning, health and safety needs, and lead industrial action in the NHS and the independent sector.

A blended approach to reps' learning

This year saw us launch our first ever truly blended learning offer for new RCN reps. The new Pathway for RCN Representatives blends online learning with facilitated group activity to provide new reps with a varied and interesting pathway that makes the very best use of technology and valuable group learning opportunities. It also encourages reps to become active as soon as possible and to work closely with their regional or country teams to put their learning into practice. Following the pandemic, it was great to be back working in groups and getting to spend time with each other.

Joint Reps conferences

We held 2 in-person UK Joint Reps conferences in 2023. While *Fair Pay for Nursing* remained central to the conference agenda, other topics explored included:

- women's health at work
- a new dawn for nursing activism
- trans rights
- challenging racism and inequality
- body-worn cameras
- recognition in the independent sector.

Joint reps conference agendas are co-created by RCN reps and a highlights package for each conference is available to reps who are unable to attend [here](#).

RCN Changemakers

RCN Changemakers are a network of reps who:

- have stepped forward and made a commitment to share their stories, ideas and energy in ways that motivate and inspire others to be changemakers in their own workplaces
- work in collaboration with RCN staff and others, using a co-creation approach, to develop new resources for reps and members drawing on their experience and expertise.

A celebration and working event was held in November to acknowledge their contribution to the rep community and to scope out ideas for future initiatives.

Looking ahead

In 2024 reps can expect more high-quality learning and development including:

- a project to refresh and expand our Continuing Learning and Development (CL&D) offer for reps
- credible, reliable and timely information, advice and guidance on emerging issues and opportunities.
- 2 more UK conferences and complimentary country-specific conferences and regional events.

More widely, this will be a huge year for nursing activism with the launch of the new RCN Activism Academy which will, for the first time, look at the collective needs of all our activists and how we can grow our power to win visible change for our members in the workplace, the profession and beyond.



OUR FORUMS

Forum membership

Membership of the RCN UK Professional Forums grew steadily throughout 2023. The professional forums which represent a diverse range of nursing and midwifery specialities across health, social care and educational settings are recognised for the important contribution they make to the professional work of the College.

Despite some of the ongoing challenges for many of our forum members, they have continued to promote best practice in their specialist fields across a range of settings through the development of guidance and standards of practice, educational and other learning resources and events.

Events

During 2023, there was an increase in the return of many of the large in-person forum events. Two exhibitions were curated: ***The history of learning disability nursing*** took place early in the year (and was showcased in Scotland alongside a series of online seminars and events) and ***Once upon a time: a history of children's and young people's nursing*** exhibition was launched in November. The History of Nursing Forum led on organising events series and exhibitions in collaboration with other forums.

The annual education and international research conferences, organised by the Education and Research Forums respectively, were once again highly successful in-person events, with high profile speakers that attracted the attention of national and international delegates. There was also the return of the annual event by the Fertility Nursing Forum; the Public Health, TB National Nurses & Allied Professionals conference, as well as the Ophthalmic Nursing Forum conference.

All the forum events were successfully delivered with good attendance and positive feedback, which reflects the level of interest in the subject and the value members place on these events.

Publications

Our UK Professional Forums have continued to commit to ensuring relevant and up-to-date resources are available for nursing staff. A key focus for many has been on updating existing clinical and professional resources, with the addition of a few new publications completed and launched during the year. They include the Pain and Palliative Care Forum's ***Mouthcare matters*** resource, developed in collaboration with Marie Curie and launched at Congress in May, and ***Advanced nursing practice for gynaecology and women's health***, completed by the Women's Health Forum.

We also updated our online ***Diabetes essentials*** resource which provides a learning platform that members can utilise flexibly, depending on their pre-existing knowledge.

Influencing activity

Our forum members have always taken the opportunity, whenever possible, to influence nursing policy and practice; 2023 has been no different. This activity by forum members has been through their contribution to clinical/professional consultations and attendance at a range of meetings or events on behalf of the RCN. All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) meetings are an example of this where on separate occasions, the matter being discussed required the clinical expertise of members from the Ophthalmic Nursing, Bladder and Bowel, General Practice Nursing and Public Health forums. While the impact of the representation from the Cancer Care Forum on the European stage has been influential in shaping education standards for cancer nursing across Europe.

Representations undertaken by forum members have been essential in ensuring the nursing voice is present in the developments and changes that affect the profession.

Congress

At Congress 2023, there was a notable increase in the number of forum committee members attending and participating in delivering the professional content of the event. Many led and contributed to the resolution items and matters for discussion or collaborated with others to create and deliver contemporary content for the Learning and Wellbeing programme.

The success of the World Café event, where there was representation from most of the forums, has led to it becoming a regular feature at Congress. It provided the opportunity for the forums to have greater levels of engagement with the wider RCN membership and increase the profile of the forums and awareness of the nature and level of work undertaken.

Other key achievements

In addition to the range of forum specific activities undertaken throughout 2023, forum members have played a key role in some of our corporate policy developments. For example, members of the Nurses in Management and Leadership Forum contributed to the production of the RCN Professional Framework, particularly to the levels of practice workstream in defining leadership and management practice levels guidance.

Forum members have also contributed to the development of a revised definition of nursing and to the revisions of the Principles of Nursing Practice. Both these developments have been published and are widely accessible via our website.

Steady progress has been made with the implementation of the Forums and Networks (F&N) review recommendations. Many of the operational recommendations have been implemented and integrated into 'business as usual' activities.

During the later months of 2023, the rollout of RCN email addresses for forum chairs and their forums has taken place, along with access to MS Teams to better support communication between forum steering committee members. This has helped strengthen communication and engagement between members, in line with the recommendations from the F&N review.

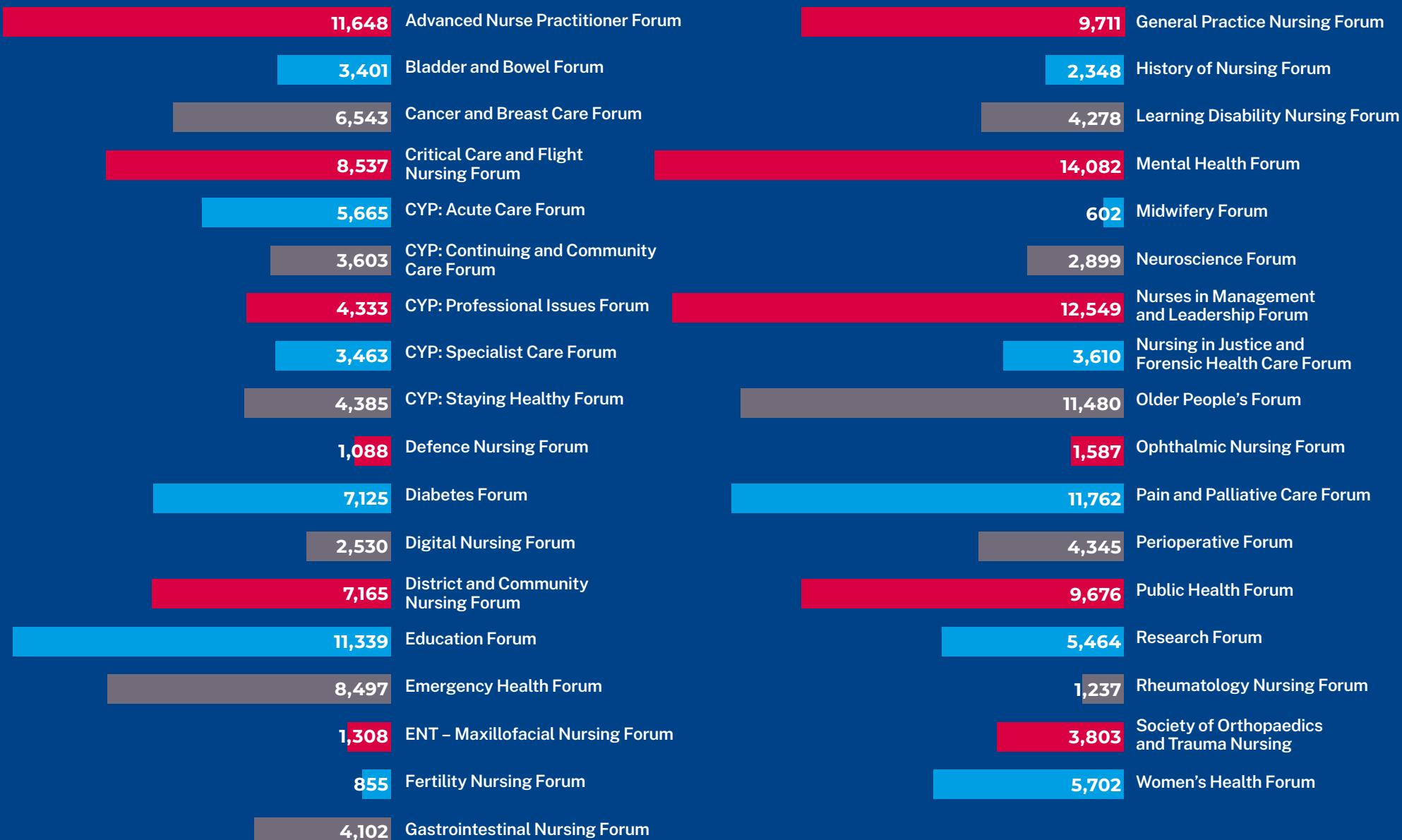
At the end of the year, the development of a leadership support programme for forum chairs and committee members was in the final stages of completion. This programme has been developed to address the need identified in the review to support forum steering committee members in their leadership role and is on track for delivery in 2024 through a combination of face-to-face and pre-recorded content.

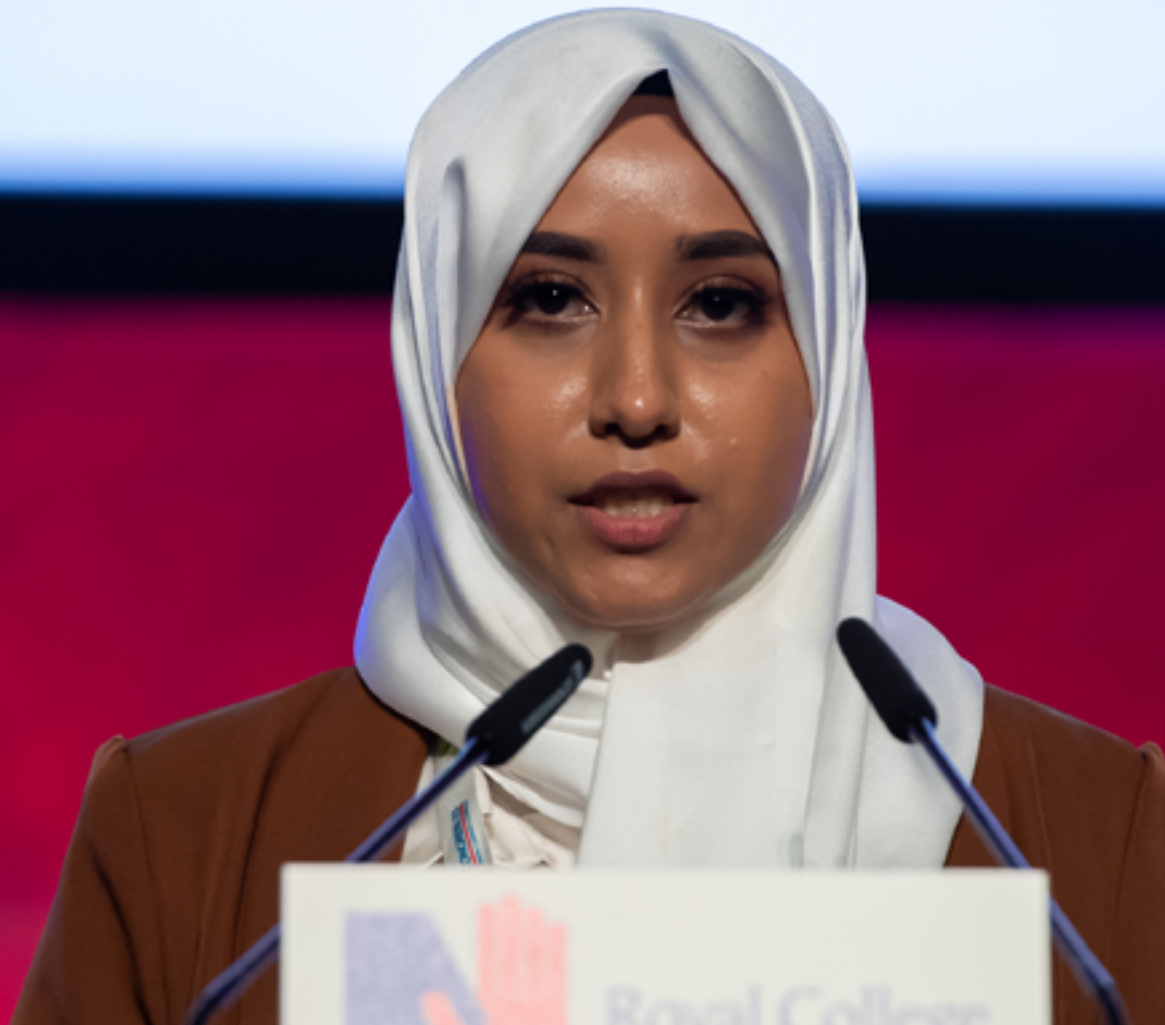
Actions to address the outcomes of the F&N review remain an RCN priority. Work will continue between the RCN members and staff to progress implementation of the recommendations as planned.

As the RCN Institute of Nursing Excellence and its academies develop, further work will need to be undertaken with forum members to clarify where their activities fit within the model and ensure their contributions align to the Institute's objectives.

Work will continue to look more broadly at how the functioning of the forums can be enhanced and further supported to raise the profile of the professional work undertaken by the College and to advocate for improvements in nursing and midwifery practice.

Membership of RCN forums in 2023





OUR UPDATE ON CONGRESS DEBATES

COUNCIL'S REPORT TO MEMBERS

REPORT TO MEMBERS ON CONGRESS 2023

The 54th meeting of RCN Congress was held in Brighton from Sunday 14 – Thursday 18 May 2023.

Present

Linda Bailey (Vice Chair of Congress), Paul Vaughan (Vice Chair of Council), the Agenda Committee, RCN Council, Professional Nursing and Trade Union committees and representatives of the RCN Boards, Branches, RCN UK Forums, the RCN Nursing Support Workers Committee, the RCN UK Stewards, Safety and Learning Representatives Committees and the RCN Students Committee.

A. Welcome and Introduction from the Chair of Congress

The chair welcomed delegates to Congress.

B. Reports of the Agenda Committee

Congress received reports from the Agenda Committee meetings held since the previous meeting of Congress. During Congress, verbal reports of the Agenda Committee were received.

C. Resolutions and Matters for Discussion

Resolutions (R), Matters for Discussion (MfD) and Emergency Items (E) are listed on the following pages.



ABORTION (R)

SUBMITTING ENTITY:
RCN GREATER GLASGOW BRANCH

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress discusses abortion protest buffer zones and their potential impact.

Key message

Across the UK, there is evidence of rising anti-abortion activity. Some local areas are putting measures in place to protect individuals and staff; however, these are limited in their effectiveness. National legislation is required to address outstanding patient and professional protection issues. Legislation has been put forward in each country of the UK, and we will monitor the implementation.

Activities

We have:

- published updated clinical guidance on the **termination of pregnancy and abortion care**
- submitted evidence to the consultation on the non-statutory guidance for abortion clinics safe access zones in England and Wales
- continued to monitor key developments and the impact of legislation within each UK country.

We will:

- capture developing evidence of effectiveness as legislation progresses through the stages in England and Wales, and Scotland.

Status

Complete – further work will be business as usual.

Impact

Legislation would protect patients and staff. Patients would have more confidence to access services safely.

CLINICAL AUDIT (MfD)

SUBMITTING ENTITY:
RCN NORFOLK BRANCH

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress discusses if clinical audit is something to be embraced or endured.

Status

RCN Council agreed that no further action was required for this item.



COMMISSIONERS FOR OLDER PEOPLE (R)

SUBMITTING ENTITY: RCN EASTERN BOARD

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress calls upon RCN Council to lobby for a Commissioner for Older People in England and Scotland, as there are in Wales and Northern Ireland.

Key message

To ask the Westminster and Scotland governments to appoint a Commissioner for Older People for England and Scotland, as there are in Northern Ireland and Wales.

Activities

We have:

- joined the National Pensioners Convention existing campaign and are ensuring our voice is being represented in this space
- signed up to the existing coalition petition, led by Age UK and Independent Age to support the move to an Older People's Commissioner in England
- responded to a consultation on Parliamentary Proposed Commissioner for Older People (Scotland Bill) supporting the draft proposal for a bill to establish an independent commissioner
- built connections with key stakeholders, via meetings and committee membership, including Independent Age, Age UK, Ageing Better and the British Geriatrics Society

- met with Independent Age and Ageing Better to understand some of the potential benefits an Older People's Commissioner could bring in relation to planning accessible housing, reducing cold homes and falls in homes, working lives and accessible transport. All of which could support a reduction in health inequalities and emergency admissions to hospital for older people.
- became a member of the campaign calling for an Older People's Commission in England and Scotland, joining over 70 organisations
- met with the chief executive of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Older People Office for insight into the benefits of the role and the impact the older people's commissioner has had in Northern Ireland. This was also an opportunity to ensure the Commissioner's office is fully aware of our position regarding the development of commissioner roles in England and Scotland
- produced a letter template available on the RCN website to support members to lobby local MPs.

We will:

- create campaigning resources for members to use, including the recently launched letter template to support members to lobby their MPs and local decision makers

Status

Complete – further work will be business as usual.

Impact

Our actions strengthen the voice and lobbying position of the existing campaign for an Older People's Commissioner in England and Scotland.

CORRIDOR CARE (MfD)

SUBMITTING ENTITY: RCN GLOUCESTERSHIRE BRANCH

You said

That this meeting of Congress asks Council to lobby the government to completely abolish corridor care and ensure that the respect and dignity of patients is upheld.

Key message

Patients are being assessed and cared for in inappropriate locations with insufficient nursing workforce, equipment, or facilities to maintain safety, privacy and dignity. As well as the negative impact for patients and their carers, there is also the detrimental effect on the health and wellbeing of staff, as well as on their ability to undertake research and other broader nursing duties.

Activities

We have:

- commissioned research by Sheffield University including:
 - an evidence review of nurse and patient experiences of overcrowding, boarding and corridor care
 - a review of media stories to illustrate the impact of corridor care on nurse and patient experiences

- included discrete questions on corridor care in the *Last Shift Survey*
- hosted 5 UK virtual listening events to explore nursing staff's experience of corridor care
- signposted to Sensemaker to capture stories illustrating the impact and extent of corridor care
- used the research findings, data from the listening events, the *Last Shift Survey*, and Sensemaker to develop a summary of evidence to be shared at Congress
- held a roundtable event on corridor care with other royal colleges and organisations
- highlighted corridor care as an issue at all available media opportunities and developed social media messaging reinforcing corridor care should not be normalised
- provided an update and information session on corridor care to RCN Advice to support conversations with members.

We will:

- continue to progress corridor care work as part of the RCN Staffing for Safe and Effective Care programme.

Status

Complete – further work will be business as usual.

Impact

Raise awareness of the concerns of our members and de-normalise this unsafe practice.

COST OF LIVING (R)

SUBMITTING ENTITY:
RCN DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY BRANCH

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress considers the cost of going to work.

Key message

The rising cost of living across the UK, alongside the diminishing spending power of nursing wages and the additional costs many nursing staff face just to support their employment have reached unsustainable levels.



Activities

We have:

- run member webinars to highlight the value of the NHS pension scheme by promoting the new pension flexibilities
- secured banding uplifts by promoting our new job evaluation tool.
- provided materials for local reps and officers to deliver on our position statement on free parking and sustainable travel to work for the whole nursing workforce
- been working with the Department of Health and Social Care to remove 'cliff edge' pension scenarios and to reduce the level of affordability-based opt outs
- made a submission to the 2024/25 Pay Review Body.

Status

Complete – further work will be business as usual.

Impact

Our actions will support our campaign and lobbying work on nursing pay, terms and conditions and on the value of nursing.

Left: Evan Keir, proposer of this debate, at Congress 2023.

FAIR PAY FOR NURSING (MfD)

SUBMITTING ENTITY:
RCN PUBLIC HEALTH FORUM

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress discusses the successes and learning from the current *Fair Pay for Nursing* campaign.

Key message

Following this discussion, lessons-learned activity has taken place across all key areas of the Fair Pay for Nursing campaign, focusing on the industrial action period between November 2022 and May 2023.

Activities

We have:

- completed the second phase learning across key workstreams of the *Fair Pay for Nursing* campaign
- gathered intelligence across the College and through externally commissioned member research (involving 9,653 members)
- instigated change activity as a result of the research including developing bespoke engagement pathways for members with specific characteristics who have lower engagement but are highly likely to act when they do engage
- improved central intelligence systems for ballot feedback and oversight
- developed technology to capture sentiment from conversations held with active members



- reviewed finance structures to improve spend efficiency and budget phasing.

We will:

- develop an action plan to ensure we are ballot ready at all times, incorporating the relevant learning from the 2022-23 action. This will include improving data quality and revisiting the learning from derogations. During the early days of strike action, we found our derogation approach was too lenient and revisions were made as strikes continued. Our strategic derogation approach will now be different to reflect the changes we implemented and also the minimum service levels now in place with the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act 2023.

Status

Work in progress.

Impact

Implementing the findings of this learning activity means that future campaigns, including any ballots or industrial action, will be more effective and impactful, engaging members and policy makers at the most appropriate times and through the most appropriate channels.

HEALTH CARE PROVISION FOR REFUGEES AND THOSE SEEKING ASYLUM (R)

SUBMITTING ENTITY: RCN NURSING IN JUSTICE AND FORENSICS FORUM AND RCN PUBLIC HEALTH FORUM

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress asks RCN Council to lobby the UK government to comply with its international and legal obligations in ensuring health.

Key message

In the UK, conditions within asylum processing centres and detention facilities present significant challenges to the provision of health care. As the voice for nursing, we have a key role to play in advocating for patients including those within immigration detention facilities, and temporary asylum accommodation.

Activities

We have:

- forced the Home Office to reverse its decision to make that would have given people just 7 days' notice to leave asylum accommodation. This was achieved through sectoral lobbying including, with other health organisations, signing a joint letter to the Home Secretary which highlighted health impacts [rcn.org.uk/About-us/Our-Influencing-work/Open-letters/health-impacts-of-changes-to-the-move-on-period-for-new-refugees](https://www.rcn.org.uk/About-us/Our-Influencing-work/Open-letters/health-impacts-of-changes-to-the-move-on-period-for-new-refugees)

- highlighted concerns on the health consequences of the Safety of Rwanda Bill. We are called for the bill to be scrapped and in March 2024, briefed key parliamentarians on our concerns ahead of the House of Lords Report stage [rcn.org.uk/About-us/Our-Influencing-work/Policy-briefings/br-0224-1](https://www.rcn.org.uk/About-us/Our-Influencing-work/Policy-briefings/br-0224-1)
- signed a joint letter on the health consequences of the Safety of Rwanda Bill alongside other organisations representing health professionals [rcn.org.uk/About-us/Our-Influencing-work/Open-letters/joint-statement-on-the-health-consequences-of-the-safety-of-rwanda-bill](https://www.rcn.org.uk/About-us/Our-Influencing-work/Open-letters/joint-statement-on-the-health-consequences-of-the-safety-of-rwanda-bill)
- updated our guidance page for members which will be reviewed annually, and updated as new issue areas develop [rcn.org.uk/clinical-topics/Public-health/Inclusion-health-care/Migrant-health](https://www.rcn.org.uk/clinical-topics/Public-health/Inclusion-health-care/Migrant-health)

We will:

- continue to identify opportunities to lobby on this issue, including working jointly with other health organisations. This includes Doctors of the World, Médecins sans Frontier and the British Medical Association
- publish a position statement.

Status

Complete – further work will be business as usual.

Impact

Building up stakeholder relationships and has allowed us to strengthen our voice by jointly lobbying on key policy changes. We have successfully positioned ourselves as an organisation that will speak with expertise on issues relating to health care for people seeking asylum.

INCIDENT REPORTING (R)

SUBMITTING ENTITY:
RCN NORFOLK BRANCH

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress asks RCN Council to explore the culture around incident reporting and the impact that this can have.



Key message

Reporting incidents/near misses is key to the reduction/prevention of workplace occurrences but many staff are reluctant to make reports for fear of detriment or not being treated fairly and supported. In order to gain the benefits and learning from incidents, easy to use systems and safe environments are essential.

Activities

We have:

- been communicating with UK stakeholders on content for a position statement. This includes the proposers and committee lead.

We will:

- launch a position statement that will identify the RCN stance and refer to resources for the nursing profession.

Status

Work in progress.

Impact

Our position statement, which is informed by current RCN and stakeholder information, will ensure members and the wider nursing profession are able to use incident reporting to support delivery of safe and effective care.

Left: Siobhann Leviton, proposer of this debate, speaking at Congress.

LGBTQ+ AND HATE CRIME (R)

SUBMITTING ENTITY:
RCN PUBLIC HEALTH FORUM

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress demands Council to support the role of nursing in supporting members of the LGBTQ+ communities who are victims of hate crime.

Key message

We will provide resources for our members to aid them in supporting all victims of hate crime including LGBTQ+ people.

Activities

We have:

- published an article in the RCN magazine featuring Jason Warriner providing information about tackling hate crime.

We will:

- launch an audio recording of Jason Warriner and Liz Curr, sharing their insights into the importance of tackling hate crime, scheduled for June 2024.
- hold an in-person EDI conference in December 2024.

Above, right: Jason Warriner, proposer of this debate, speaking at Congress 2023.



Status

Work in progress.

Impact

Our members will be equipped to care for patients who have been the victims of LGBTQ+ hate crime.

MEMBER POWER (MfD)

SUBMITTING ENTITY: RCN MENTAL HEALTH FORUM

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress calls on RCN Council to fully commit to building on and strengthening the undeniable power of the membership voice and further increase their influence and positive public opinion.

Key message

RCN Council, the Executive Team and the entire organisation are doing everything they can to support, encourage and enable members to use their voices to influence policy and public opinion.

Activities

We have:

- been mentioned over 30 times in Westminster between Congress last year and March 2024
- continued to take a leading role on holding the Wales and Scotland governments to account over their staffing commitments. In Northern Ireland our members once again took the ultimate step to withdraw their labour, advocating in the strongest possible terms for the profession and their patients
- launched the RCN Institute of Nursing Excellence which includes the Activism Academy. This is the clearest demonstration of Council's commitment to building on and strengthening the power of the member voice
- empowered members to confront local issues and secure changes. In Somerset, members made a powerful case to their trust for improvements to the local parking and public infrastructure
- heard from thousands of members via surveys and consultation. More than 9,000 members contributed to our consultation response on a separate pay spine for nursing in England. Hundreds of members are using Sensemaker to tell us about the realities of nursing today. These stories enable us to prioritise, advocate and campaign on the issues that really matter to our members
- held a session with members of the UK Stewards, Learning Reps and Health and Safety Reps committees in January called 'How to build a powerful RCN in your workplace'
- held webinars for our internationally educated nurse members, demonstrating our commitment to them and providing bespoke support and advice to help them with their professional and personal transition to life in the UK and welcome them fully into our College
- hosted 5 UK virtual listening events for nurses, to explore their experience of corridor care.
- held two safe staffing summits, which have made a compelling case for nurse-to-patient ratios and as this work evolves, it will be our members who make it a reality.

We will:

- ensure the Activism Academy empowers members to see what is possible when they come together with the backing of their union to advocate for change
- give members, who want to get involved the information, resources, training and advice they need to make the difference they want to see.

Status

Complete – further work will be business as usual.

Impact

By reporting the wide range of activities being undertaken by members – and the impact those activities are having – more members will feel encouraged to take part.



NHS PAY REVIEW BODY (R)

SUBMITTING ENTITY: RCN Lothian and Borders Branch

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress calls on the RCN to withdraw from the NHS Pay Review Body.

Key message

The RCN is not a member of the NHS Pay Review Body (PRB). Depending on a remit being given to the PRB by each of the respective governments of the UK countries, the PRB may seek a submission and/or evidence from us to assist them in discharging its function of making recommendations to the UK governments on NHS pay. The decision to submit evidence or engage with the PRB is one which we take based on the best interests of our members and considering what options are available.

We did not submit evidence to the PRB for the 2023-24 pay round – at the time, following industrial action by our members, the Westminster government had entered direct negotiations with us.

The RCN TU Committee and Council decided that, in the absence of any alternative process (such as direct negotiations) and to ensure the nursing voice on pay was presented to the NHS PRB, we should on this occasion submit evidence to the PRB for the 2024-25 pay round.

Activities

We have:

- decided that, in the absence of any alternative process (such as direct negotiations) and to ensure the nursing voice was presented to the NHS PRB, that the RCN should submit evidence. Council and the Trade Union Committee agreed that we should submit evidence to the PRB for the 2024-25 pay round
- submitted written evidence to the NHS PRB and provided oral evidence/responses to the PRB questions relating to our evidence and nursing pay
- made clear our position for improvements to nursing pay in the NHS and also our position of significant concern relating to the NHS PRB processes
- raised concerns on a number of issues, including an already delayed process and a report date of May 2024 (making nurse staff wait longer for their April 2024 pay rise)
- delivered this activity as part of the business-as-usual activity of the RCN in working to improve the pay, terms and conditions of RCN members.

Status

Complete – further work will be business as usual.

Impact

Depending on a remit being given to it by the relevant government in each of the UK countries, the NHS PRB makes recommendations on NHS pay to those governments. It is the respective government that then determines NHS pay and any changes.

Approximately 350,000 RCN members are directly employed by the NHS and have their pay determined by the government in their respective country.

NURSING ASSOCIATES (R)

SUBMITTING ENTITY:
RCN GREATER GLASGOW BRANCH

You said

That this session of RCN Congress discusses the impact of and direction of the registered nursing associate role.

Key message

As the lead body for nursing and with nursing associates included in our membership, we will examine the benefits of nursing associates in England.

Activities

We have:

- updated our position statement in December 2023, which addresses the role and scope of practice of nursing associates [rcn.org.uk/About-us/Our-Influencing-work/Position-statements/rcn-position-statement-on-the-role-and-scope-of-practice-on-the-nursing-associate](https://www.rcn.org.uk/About-us/Our-Influencing-work/Position-statements/rcn-position-statement-on-the-role-and-scope-of-practice-on-the-nursing-associate). As agreed, by our Professional Nursing Committee on 20 March, we have strengthened and clarified the statement
- developed a position statement on medical associate professionals (MAPs) [rcn.org.uk/About-us/Our-Influencing-work/Position-statements/rcn-position-statement-on-medical-associate-professionals#:~:text=The%20RCN%20raised%20concerns%20from,doctors%2C%20including%20in%20surgery%20settings](https://www.rcn.org.uk/About-us/Our-Influencing-work/Position-statements/rcn-position-statement-on-medical-associate-professionals#:~:text=The%20RCN%20raised%20concerns%20from,doctors%2C%20including%20in%20surgery%20settings)

Status

Complete.

Impact

Clarifying the role of the nursing associate ensures that we can protect them from being asked to work outside of their scope of competence and from being used as unsuitable substitutions for registered nurses.



NURSING SUPPORT WORKERS (MfD)

**SUBMITTING ENTITY:
RCN NURSING SUPPORT WORKERS COMMITTEE**

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress discusses the availability of courses and resources for nursing support workers (NSWs).

Key message

Parity of education and learning resources is key for the nursing support workforce which comprises a plethora of roles including trainee nursing associates, nursing associates, health care assistants, assistant practitioners and health care support workers. The future outcomes of this work will continue to build on our educational offer.

Activities

We have:

- completed an evidence review and research into current UK offerings for NSWs which will be used to shape our future direction
- commissioned Research by Design to conduct secondary research to enable a detailed assessment and summary of the existing UK-wide picture for NSW learning and educational resources
- completed a review of our current RCN Learn resources available to NSW members. We have approximately 200 learning resources (approximately 80% of the total available).



We will:

- advocate for the nursing support workforce to have greater access to learning time during working hours, as part of our ongoing policy influencing programme of work
- advocate for better access to health and social care apprenticeships at levels 2 and 3
- advocate for better access to professional development funding for NSWs.

Status

Complete – further work will be business as usual.

Impact

Improved access to education and learning for NSWs across health and social care, supporting their practice development.

OLDER HEALTH CARE WORKERS (R)

SUBMITTING ENTITY:
RCN GREATER LIVERPOOL AND KNOWSLEY BRANCH

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress calls on RCN Council to lobby employers to ensure the welfare and occupational safety of older health care workers.

Key message

To ensure the welfare and occupational safety of older health care workers.

Activities

We have:

- updated our *Valuing older workers* publication which was last reviewed in 2021. We aim to publish this in autumn 2024.

Status

Work in progress.

Impact

Greater awareness of how to support the health and occupational safety of older workers.



Above: Adrian Williams, proposer of this debate, speaking at Congress 2023.

PAY, TERMS AND CONDITIONS PARITY (R)

SUBMITTING ENTITY: RCN OUTER NORTH CENTRAL LONDON BRANCH

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress asks RCN Council to lobby the UK governments for minimum standards for employment terms and conditions for all nursing workforce in any organisation funded by the public purse.

Key message

Wherever members work across the health and social care landscape, they can be assured that we will be arguing for these minimum standards with employers and lobbying the UK governments.

Activities

We have:

- established a UK-wide working group to support the work on this resolution
- undertaken a survey of our members working in GP practices to get a clearer idea of how the 2023/2024 pay award has been implemented. As a result of the survey, we have written to Local Medical Committees calling on their support and are working closely with the British Medical Association to collectively respond to this issue rcn.org.uk/Get-Involved/Campaign-with-us/Fair-Pay-for-Nursing/fair-pay-for-general-practice-nursing-staff

- worked with members in non-NHS employers who provide NHS care to secure the non-consolidated payment element of the NHS pay award
- worked with Social Enterprise UK to lobby the government to provide the 2022/23 non-consolidated pay award element in addition to the 2023/24 NHS pay award to those working in the independent sector delivering NHS care
- reviewed our positions on pay, terms and conditions for members working across the independent health and social care sectors. Our Trade Union Committee has confirmed the current positions remain relevant and will be under constant review
- held a fringe discussion at the spring Joint Reps Conference on our draft RCN Nursing Employment Standards.

We will:

- further develop the RCN Nursing Employment Standards. The standards will set out our expectations for members in all settings. When the standards are launched, they will be shared with the membership and key stakeholders
- use the updated RCN Nursing Employment Standards to inform our lobbying of UK governments and employers, including in situations of direct, or sectoral, collective bargaining with the employers of nursing staff and our members.
- continue to work with the BMA to secure funding for fair and equitable pay for nurses employed by general practices.

Status

Work in progress.

Impact

Parity in pay, terms and conditions will provide greater fairness and help to recruit and retain nursing staff in affected settings.

PRIVATE HEALTH CARE (MfD)

SUBMITTING ENTITY:
RCN DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY BRANCH

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress discusses the role of private health care in a modern health system.

Status

RCN Council agreed that no further action was required for this item.

The Brighton Centre, home to Congress 2023



ONE ROYAL COLLEGE – TWO CRITICAL FUNCTIONS (R)

SUBMITTING ENTITY:
RCN PROFESSIONAL NURSING COMMITTEE

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress affirms the strength of the Royal College of Nursing arising from our dual function as both a professional body and a trade union.

Key message

The strength of the Royal College of Nursing continues to be in its dual function as both a professional body and a trade union.

Activities

We have:

- evidenced the strength of our dual function. Examples of bringing together our trade union and professional expertise are:
 - our **Nursing Workforce Standards** which enable members to hold employers, policy makers and governments to account
 - in 2024, we will launch our Employment Standards, for members working across independent health and social care sectors and settings
 - we are the professional authority on all aspects of nursing and are called upon to provide the definitive voice for the profession. Since Congress last year, we have featured in 20,000 pieces of online news coverage; been mentioned

1,500 times on radio and TV and 1,500 times in newspapers. We use our influence to keep nursing at the top of the media and political agendas, meaning the public hear your stories, concerns and experiences

- in December 2023 and March 2024, we held our first safe staffing summits, bringing together global workforce experts with senior nurses. These summits aimed to build a nationwide consensus for change amongst nursing leaders, who heard how international health systems and responsive governments are tackling staff shortages by implementing registered nurse to patient ratios and providing a safety-critical 'red line' beyond which staffing levels must not fall
- our new RCN Institute of Nursing Excellence demonstrates a significant commitment to leadership within both functions. The 5 academies of the Institute reflect our professional nursing expertise and our leadership in both trade union and professional activism.
- internally, our Professional Nursing Committee and Trade Union Committee continue to work collaboratively. Each committee has its own set of delegated responsibilities, accountable to RCN Council. They increasingly work closely together on many of the major issues facing the workforce.

Status

Complete – further work will be business as usual.

Impact

Evidence shows that the RCN's dual function is affirmed.

RCN DEMOCRACY (R)

SUBMITTING ENTITY:
RCN LOTHIAN AND BORDERS BRANCH

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress calls for all members of the RCN to be given equal democratic rights within the organisation.

Key message

As the lead body for nursing and with nursing associates included in our membership, we will examine the benefits of nursing associates in England.



Activities

We have:

- completed an eligibility mapping process for nursing support workers (NSWs) which showed that they are eligible to stand for most RCN roles, at country, regional and national level and are eligible to become accredited representatives. NSW members are also eligible to be nominated for RCN Award of Merit and Representative of the Year awards. They must be in the full payment plan, which is the same requirement for nurse members
- agreed that they are not eligible to be RCN President, RCN Deputy President and Council members for country and regional seats.

We will:

- consider NSW eligibility for elected and appointed roles as the Governance Committee, in conjunction with the oversight work of the Governance and Culture Reviews Joint Partnership Board, undertakes a review of the RCN's governance structures, as recommended by the KPMG and Carr reviews. Changes to the eligibility criteria for elected and appointed officer roles (for example, RCN President) would require approval from two-thirds of the membership in attendance at a general meeting.

Status

Complete – further work will be business as usual.

Impact

To be determined.

Left: Geoff Earl, proposer of this debate, speaking at Congress 2023.

STUDENT NURSES (R)

SUBMITTING ENTITY:
RCN STUDENTS COMMITTEE

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress condemns rostering of student nurses and student midwives to cover gaps in staffing.

Key message

Rosters must be drawn up to meet the learning needs of the student and not operational needs which impact the supernumerary status of students.

Activities

We have:

- consulted with our Student Committee on identifying activities for this resolution
- drafted the RCN *Nursing Workforce Standards* checklist for student nurses which will be published shortly
- undertaken a survey with our student members to identify:
 - their last placement experience and student rota changes. Data will be collected in the same way as the registered nurses Last Shift Survey



- the extent of student nurse rota changes
- supernumerary status and the effect on student learning.

We will:

- review the findings from the student members survey at the UK Students Committee and share with the membership
- update the RCN *Raising concerns* web page to support students in raising concerns in their placement areas as identified in the *Nursing Workforce Standards* checklist.

Status

Work in progress.

Impact

Students more able to identify and challenge inappropriate rostering, supporting their learning and supernumerary status.

SUPPORT FOR FEMALE WORKERS (R)

SUBMITTING ENTITY:
RCN FERTILITY NURSING FORUM

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress asks RCN Council to lobby employers to ensure that female employees are supported with specific women's health and wellbeing needs such as menopause, menstruation, fertility care, pregnancy and childbirth.

Key message

Members need support with a range of reproductive conditions in the workplace. There is currently a big focus on the menopause and awareness needs to be raised for a number of reproductive conditions and issues, including endometriosis, polycystic ovary syndrome, menstruation, miscarriage, fertility treatment, working when breast feeding, perimenopause and their link with mental health.

Activities

We have:

- drafted a position statement for the Trade Union Committee to review and approve
- held a session at the Spring 2024 Joint Reps Conference on menstrual wellbeing at work.



We will:

- produce guidance to manage conditions in the workplace titled *Female reproductive health at work*
- launch the RCN's position statement at a webinar at the end of July.

Status

Work in progress.

Impact

Greater awareness of how to manage and support female reproductive health in the workplace.

Above: Francesca Steyn, proposer of this debate, speaking at Congress 2023.

TRADES UNION CONGRESS (R)

SUBMITTING ENTITY:
**RCN GREATER LIVERPOOL AND KNOWSLEY
BRANCH**

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress asks RCN Council to examine the case for the RCN to join the Trades Union Congress..

Status

Work in progress.

Impact

This resolution was not passed at RCN Congress 2023.

Right: Mike Travis, proposer of this debate, speaking at Congress 2023.



UNCONSCIOUS BIAS (MfD)

SUBMITTING ENTITY:
RCN EASTERN BOARD

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress discusses how it can support and improve awareness of unconscious bias within health care.

Key message

Unconscious (or implicit) bias describes the associations we hold that are believed to be outside our conscious awareness and control. Unconscious bias affects everyone and awareness of it is central to improving health care for both colleagues and patients.

Activities

We have:

- continued to promote the RCN Cultural Ambassador programme, which responds effectively to incidents of unconscious bias.

We will:

- develop an equity, diversity and inclusion toolkit and launch it by November 2024
- hold an in-person workshop on unconscious bias at the RCN EDI Conference, which will be held in December 2024.

Status

Work in progress.

Impact

Recognising unconscious bias will support members to deliver and advocate for equity, diversity and inclusion in their workplaces and care.



Natalie Brooks, proposer of this debate, speaking at Congress 2023.

WINDRUSH AND NHS 75 (MfD)

SUBMITTING ENTITY:
**RCN GREATER LIVERPOOL AND KNOWSLEY
BRANCH**

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress acknowledges the 75th anniversary of the creation of the NHS and the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the Windrush generation to staff the service.

Status

RCN Council agreed that no further action was required for this item.

Right: Carmel O'Boyle, proposer of this debate, speaking at Congress 2023.



RCN IS AN ANTI-RACIST ORGANISATION (E)

SUBMITTING ENTITY: RCN LONDON BOARD

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress calls on RCN Council to ensure that the RCN is an anti-racist organisation.

Key message

Tackling incidents of racism is not enough. Organisations and individuals must proactively seek to change the systems, processes and environments which enable discrimination and inequity.

This resolution commits us to a transformational programme, that will require time to deliver as it focuses on listening to and responding intelligently to the lived experiences of members, staff and other stakeholders and redesigning process and structures to prevent discrimination and deliver equity.

Activities

We have:

- organised a member working group which seeks to support those active in the governance structure to embed anti-racist practice in behaviour and decision-making. The group also seeks to ensure that anti-racist practice is embedded throughout our RCN Institute of Clinical Excellence structure and in human resources practice for all RCN staff
- arranged a series of summits focussing on the lived experience of global majority members. Each summit brings together global majority members from across the 4 countries and throughout the membership structure. The first summit was held on 25 April 2024 and brought together subject matter experts and those with lived experience. Subsequent sessions are scheduled for June, September, and November 2024. There are 3 phases of this transformational work. Phase 1 will focus on member support, phase 2, governance and structures and phase 3, RCN staff
- devised an action plan that recognises the long-term and transformative nature of this specific resolution. In the first instance to explore member interaction with the RCN at different stages of the working cycle
- been reviewing feedback from global majority members on their experiences of RCN representation
- changed recruitment practices
- looked at how we can target specific communities when we hold elections and appointments to representative and governance roles
- confirmed Professor Emmanuel Ogbonna from Cardiff University will join us at Congress 2024 to deliver the annual Mary Seacole lecture. As the Co-chair of the External Oversight Group for the Welsh Anti-racism plan, his insights will be particularly useful and timely for RCN members.

We will:

- define the RCN definition of anti-racism, in an organisational context, led by the working group. The agreed definition will be shared with the membership
- review our representative/staff learning and development to reflect the learning from the case work reviews
- provide reports to the new EDI Committee from June 2024
- embed the agreed action plan within the EDI Strategy delivery programme.

Status

Work in progress. This is a long-term programme, which will align with the EDI Strategy timetable.

Impact

This work on anti-racism seeks to create a trade union and professional association that is intentional in its implementation of this work and holistically embeds racially-just cultures, processes and policies that deliver racial equity in outcomes and experiences for all RCN members and staff.

SUICIDE PREVENTION (E)

SUBMITTING ENTITY:
RCN EAST SUSSEX BRANCH

You said

That this meeting of Congress calls on Council to lobby for the implementation of an evidence-based, integrated suicide prevention programme for the nursing workforce across the UK.

Key message

We will work collaboratively to eliminate the stigma surrounding mental health and suicide, promoting greater understanding and empathy. We must hold our profession and the systems in which we work accountable through transparency and responsibility. Working together can cultivate a culture of civility and compassion within our teams and organisations.

Activities

We have:

- commissioned a deep dive into RCN data. The report will have actions and recommendations for us, as an organisation and the broader health and care systems.
- embedded suicide prevention as a core framework in our highly sought-after Psychosocial Interventions education programme

- met with the Health and Safety Executive as part of their reviews into work-related stress and the Reporting of Incidents, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)
- supported the development of the Universities of Surrey, Keele, and Birmingham's guidance for NHS workers following the death of a colleague by suicide
- joined a stakeholder group to support research by the University of Surrey on *Revisoning nurse distress and suicidality*
- engaged with Oxford University's work on suicide prevention in the health and care workforce – the most relevant focus is currently being scoped
- members on the steering committee for the development of an undergraduate and pre-registration suicide and self-harm curriculum
- Black, Asian and global majority members on the National Suicide Prevention Strategy Advisory Group
- emphasised our member's position on suicide prevention in our response to the 'Labour Party review of mental health policy'.

We will:

- explore and understand the factors influencing suicidal thoughts among UK nursing staff
- explore and understand the support or interventions that may have helped these nursing staff manage and overcome suicidal thoughts
- develop an action plan to implement and embed best practices based on the research findings

- work across 2 of the academies of our Institute of Nursing Excellence (Nursing Practice Academy and Activism Academy) to equip our reps to support the implementation of any relevant guidance
- hold a second Suicide Prevention Summit at RCN HQ, focusing on research, data and collaboration.

Status

Complete – further work will be business as usual.

Impact

A media piece was covered in the mainstream press, highlighting the exponential increase of reported suicidal ideation from our members accessing RCN counselling. We also have broader data of members reporting suicidal thoughts who have not accessed counselling but other support services or representation at work.

In our press release, we also referred to the work of this group. The edits also include our support/endorsement of the NHSE Suicide Prevention Toolkit, re-emphasising the toolkit's core aims.

Our deep dive into RCN data has revealed a growing number of reports of suicidal thoughts among RCN members who contact our member services. Driven by our steering group, we have explored the underlying reasons behind these incidents. Our findings and recommendations will help members and leaders across the health and care system to better understand and address this critical issue.

Right: Ruth Bailey, proposer of this debate, speaking at Congress 2023.



DEMENTIA ACTION (E)

**SUBMITTING ENTITY:
RCN NORTHUMBERLAND, TYNE AND WEAR
BRANCH**

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress calls on RCN Council to lobby all governments across the UK for production or review of dementia strategies.

Key message

Across the UK, there is variation in the level of strategic oversight covering the treatment and support for people living with dementia. As the voice of nursing, the RCN has a key role to play in working with stakeholders and coalitions to call for dementia strategies where relevant.

Activities

We have:

- been monitoring key developments and alignment with RCN positioning within each country
- continued to undertake activity to better understand the issue and identify where the RCN's voice can make an impact, within the context of local and general elections, in partnership with key stakeholders and supporting coalition campaigns where relevant.

Status

Work in progress.

Impact

We continue to engage with stakeholders and monitor developments in this area, looking for opportunities to support campaigning efforts in collaboration with others, and to include this positioning in key influencing content.

Having clear, consistent strategies across the UK, replacing the variation that exists now, will benefit the treatment and support for people living with dementia.

Below: Loretta Wright, proposer of this debate, speaking at Congress 2023.



HEALTH CARE PROVISION FOR AUTISTIC PEOPLE (E)

SUBMITTING ENTITY:
RCN LEARNING DISABILITIES FORUM

You said

That this meeting of Congress urges RCN Council to lobby health care providers and commissioners to mandate appropriate and sufficient provision to avoid inappropriate placement for autistic people.

Key message

Across health and social care, autistic people are not receiving the support they need. Too frequently this results in autistic people being inappropriately placed in other services which can be detrimental to their physical and mental health and their autism needs in general.

Activities

We have:

- drafted a position statement and consulted with the Autism Nurse Consultant Network, the RCN Learning Disability Nurse Forum, and autistic people regarding the content
- requested a literature review from our library service to ensure that the references included are the most recent, most relevant, and the position statement reflects policy and practice across the UK.

We will:

- publish the position statement shortly after Congress.



Status

Work in progress.

Impact

This position statement will provide a platform for further action from the RCN in terms of supporting strategic development of support for autistic people.

Above: Sarah Jackson, proposer of this debate, speaking at Congress 2023.

SEPARATE NURSING PAY SPINE (E)

SUBMITTING ENTITY:
RCN TRADE UNION COMMITTEE

You said

That this meeting of RCN Congress discusses the case for a separate nursing pay spine within Agenda for Change.

Key message

A commitment to explore the potential for a separate nursing pay spine within the NHS was part of the 2022-23 and 2023-24 pay offer and award. The RCN has responded to the government call for evidence.

Activities

We have:

- held initial meetings with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) since early 2023. These have been exploratory and progress has been slow
- responded to the Westminster government's consultation on the potential for a separate pay spine, which was announced in January. Over 7,000 RCN members responded to our request for feedback. These responses helped shape the RCN's response.



Status

Complete – further work will be business as usual.

Impact

The impact of a separate nursing pay spine can only be speculated at this stage. However, a separate and bespoke nursing pay spine would have significant implications for the profession and the NHS if implemented.

Above: Denise Kelly, proposer of this debate, speaking at Congress 2023.





THANK YOU

RCN Council would like to thank all the members who have played an active role in the organisation in 2023, including all our learning representatives, health and safety representatives and stewards, boards, branches and committee members, and all those who have taken part in campaigns, and all our other events. Your voice matters.

We would also like to thank the external advisers to all RCN Group committees, for their knowledge, commitment and expertise.

We would like to express our warmest thanks to LV=, and to Quilter Financial Advisers for their substantial support in 2023.

The same thanks go to all the other companies, groups and individuals – far too numerous to list here – who help to make our work possible.







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