

## RCN Wales Board

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Minutes of the open meeting held on 20 September 2024

Present	Position
Jackie Davies	Chair, RCN Wales Board / Wales member on the Trade Union Committee
Steve Watson	Vice Chair / Council member for Wales
Dr Carolyn Middleton	Wales member on Professional Nursing Committee
Alison Magor	Board member
Catherine Jones	Board member
Gaynor Jones	Board member
Mark Crothers	Board member
Nicola Milligan	Board member
Rhian Smith	Board member
Richard Hughes	Board member
Suma John	Board member
Susan Williams	Board member
Apologies	
Anne Stevenson	Board member
Euan Hails	Board member
Lynne Puckett	Board member
Sandy Harding	Associate Director of Nursing (Professional Practice)
In attendance	
Helen Whyley	Executive Director, RCN Wales
Nicky Hughes	Associate Director of Nursing (Employment Relations)
Helen Carlyon	Finance & Business Continuity Manager
Katie Branch	Quality & Events Manager
Heather Searle	Executive Assistant to the Executive Director
Observers	
Harriet Brimage	RCN Officer – Job Evaluation Project
Kelly Andrews	Wales Pay, Terms & Conditions Delivery Lead

## 1. WELCOME

### 1.1. Apologies for Absence

The Board Chair welcomed everyone to the Open session.

Apologies had been received from Board members, Anne Stevenson, Euan Hails and Lynne Puckett. The Associate Director of Nursing (Professional Practice) also gave apologies.

It was noted the Wales member on Professional Nursing Committee will need to leave the meeting early.

### 1.2. Declaration of Interests

The Chair asked Board members to declare any possible interests with any items on the agenda.

Board member Richard Hughes declared he is a member of a group advising the Chief Nursing Officer.

## 2. MINUTES AND ACTIONS

### 2.1 Minutes from the previous meeting

Minutes of the Board meeting held on 10 May 2024 had been circulated and were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

### 2.2 Review of Action Sheet

All actions were either noted as completed or updated on the action sheet.

### 2.3 Matters Arising

There were no further matters arising.

## 3. OPERATIONAL UPDATES

### 3.1 RCN Wales Board Chair's Report

A report had been received and was noted.

There were no questions or comments from the Board.

### 3.2 Executive Director, RCN Wales Report

A report had been received and was noted.

The Executive Director took the Board through the report and highlighted the following:

- A meeting was held with the Executive Directors of Nursing (EDoNs) regarding the ratio campaign. Discussion was had around shared ideas to reflect the methodology in the Staffing Act. There are concerns from the EDoNs over setting numbers and context and deliverability need to be taken into account. A report will come to Board when there has been more discussion and output.
- A series of meetings have taken place with regards unscheduled care in inappropriate areas.
- The visit from the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) was very well received. Visits were made to a number of settings in Wales and a report from the CFNU outlining shared learning will be produced. An invite to attend the CFNU Summit in Ottawa in November has been received.

The Board commented that it was very positive experience to meet and engage with colleagues from the CFNU.

### 3.3 Correspondence report

A report had been received and was noted.

The Executive Director reminded the Board that correspondence is available to view by contacting the Executive Director's office.

The following correspondence was highlighted:

- There has now been a response from the Chief Nursing Officer regarding the sponsorship of a place on the leadership programme.
- The last letter to the Chief Nursing Officer attaching the RCN Report into investigations rising suicidal ideation amongst nursing staff is still outstanding but is recent.

### 3.4 Policy, Parliamentary & Public Affairs Impact Report

A report had been received and was noted.

The Policy, Parliamentary & Public Affairs Manager, joined the meeting and highlighted the following:

- The Board are asked for any views on the planned activities, consultations and committee inquiries listed in the paper.
- The report outlines the main influencing activities and outcomes of RCN Wales in the period since the last Board and any relevant public, political and policy developments that have occurred. It also outlines the influencing priorities of the team for the immediate future.

- A relationship is being developed with the new Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care. There is around nine months to develop the RCN Wales manifesto and campaign in preparation for the 2026 Senedd election.
- The next Nursing in Numbers publication will be finished this year. Publications for learning disability and Consultant Nurses are also being finalised.
- Plans are underway regarding the corridor care campaign.
- The Policy, Parliamentary and Public Affairs Manager has recently been named as one of the most influential people for campaigning for change. Featuring in the 'Your Voice' exhibition to celebrate 25 years of the Senedd.

The Board enquired whether health boards are still compliant with the Staffing Act. It was confirmed that RCN Wales ensures scrutiny is maintained and a further Progress and Challenge report will be carried out next year. Following the recent parliamentary report into the Act, the Chief Nursing Officer and Health Minister have compiled reports with recommendations. One of these is to revise the guidance under section 25b considering the registered nursing role and the need to avoid substitution.

The Board congratulated the Policy, Parliamentary and Public Affairs Manager on the 'Your Voice' exhibition.

#### 4. NHS Executive

Tracey Breheny, Director for Strategy and Corporate Business and Nick Wood, Deputy Chief Executive NHS Wales from the NHS Executive joined the meeting via Teams to present to the Board.

The presentation gave an overview of the NHS Executive and its governance, accountability, and operating models. It showed a description of the various Directorates and functions, the current areas of focus and planned work in 2024/25.

The Board enquired about the role of health boards in targeted interventions or special measures. It was confirmed that these decisions are taken on the advice of the Director General and Health Education Improvement Wales (HEIW). The NHS Executive has a role in gaining evidence to support the decision to escalate or de-escalate.

The Board enquired whether the emphasis would change due to the First Minister announcing priorities for NHS planned care and waiting times. The Board were advised that these are already included in current workplans and progress is being made. The three main priorities for the group are women's health, access to social care and waiting times. There is work operationally to integrate social care at each level of governance.

The Board Chair thanked Tracey Breheny and Nick Wood for their presentation.

## 5. STRATEGIC UPDATES

### 5.1 Congress Review

The Executive Director for RCN England joined the meeting via Teams and gave a presentation. The presentation will be given to all Board and Committees to outline the review into RCN Congress.

- Council have approved a review into Congress to ensure it is financially and environmentally sustainable, inclusive and is seen as a valued event by the whole membership not just attendees.
- Currently around 3000 members attend which represents 0.5% of RCN membership. Congress 2024 cost around £3million.
- The Carr and KPMG reports recommended RCN develop proposals to amend the structure and reduce the duration of Congress to increase uptake.
- All Boards and Committees will be invited to complete a survey by the end of October to provide a collective view.
- Following the review, any changes will be implemented in 2027.

The Chair thanked the Executive Director for RCN England for joining the Board meeting.

**ACTION** - A meeting will be arranged for Board members to complete the Congress survey.

### 5.2 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

The Chief People Officer joined the meeting via Teams and gave a presentation regarding the new group strategy which includes RCNi and RCN Foundation.

- There are five themes to the strategy and 37 commitments that sit under the themes. The strategy lasts three years but will go beyond this to embed fully across all RCN work and become business as usual.
- The EDI Strategy Programme Board has been set up internally, to meet every two months. There are several workstreams set up to meet the commitments.
- The EDI Committee, chaired by the Chief People Officer has members representing various groups. RCN Wales Board Chair sits on this group which reports to Council. The group is advisory and will engage with the strategy and input into the deliverables.

### 5.3 NHS Wales Partnership Forum

A report had been received and was noted.

The Associate Director (Employment Relations) took the Board through the paper and the following was highlighted:

- The Welsh Partnership Forum (WPF) is how unions, workforce directors and Welsh Government work together in social partnership. The Business Committee sits underneath the WPF to review and update policies. The agenda from the last meeting in July 2024 can be seen in Appendix A.
- The Education and Commissioning plan for 2025/26 was shared. The paper outlines the recommendations proposed.
- The occupational health work has moved to the next phase where the workforce model, planning and training will be considered. A governance structure will be developed for the Welsh Government to monitor progress and drive improvements.
- Disciplinary and Capability policies are under review. An overarching policy where these and the Respect and Resolution policy will sit under is being considered.
- The Speaking up Safely policy is under review and will be refreshed.
- A pregnancy loss policy has been developed for NHS Wales. This has been enhanced to 10 days paid leave and identifies the need for pregnancy loss champions.
- The next staff survey is due to go live next month. There was only a 20% uptake last time and the survey has been made more accessible.

The Board commented that the last staff survey had around 100 questions. The results were late being shared, not allowing enough time to make any

changes before the next survey. The Board were advised this feedback has been provided.

The Board enquired whether the Respect and Resolution policy is under review. The Board were advised this policy is being reviewed as part of the wider policy. RCN Wales will be consulted and representatives will be asked for feedback.

The Board were reminded that Board members can observe Welsh Partnership Forum and if interested to contact the Associate Director of Nursing (Employment Relations).

#### 5.4 RCN Wales Nurse of the Year 2024

The Quality and Events Manager spoke to the paper and the following was highlighted:

- An event was held in August for the Alumni network, a leadership masterclass from Chair of Council. The Alumni survey is still pending and will progress when the new Education and Lifelong Learning Adviser has started.
- All interview panels for 2024 have been completed. The overall nurse of the year judging panel will be held in early November.
- All award categories were fully sponsored. Additional sponsorship was secured and is detailed in the paper.
- Board members were reminded all are invited to the awards ceremony and to respond to the Quality and Events Manager.
- Confirmation has been received that City Hall will remain closed for events in 2025. There are two dates in the paper to consider for the 2025 event and the Mercure has availability.

The Board agreed for the Nurse of the Year team to decide on the date for 2025.

The Board commented that two candidates had been in contact as the interview date was not suitable and another date could not be accommodated. The Board were advised that the scheduling of panels and liaising with sponsors is a large undertaking, and the dates are announced well in advance. Candidates can join on Teams and are able to re-submit the nomination for the following year.

The Board commented on the high quality of the nominations this year.

## 5.5 Independent Health and Social Care Report

A report had been received and noted. In the absence of the Associate Director of Nursing (Professional Practice), the Executive Director spoke to the paper and the following was highlighted:

- The library in a box initiative has been positively received and this will continue next year.
- A successful roundtable on workforce standards was well attended.
- Care Home week was a positive experience and well received.

## 5.6 Library report

A report had been received and was noted. In the absence of the Associate Director of Nursing (Professional Practice), the Executive Director spoke to the paper and the following was highlighted:

- The library space has been redesigned and is more open.
- The museum cabinets are in place and the first exhibition opened yesterday.
- The paper outlines the work carried out this year and the plans to capture data moving forward, to inform future plans.

## 6. ITEMS TO NOTE

### 6.1 Reports from RCN Council meetings held in January, April, May and July 2024

The reports had been received and noted.

The Council member for Wales advised a large piece of work had been undertaken regarding the appointment process for the General Secretary and Chief Executive post.

Job descriptions and terms of reference have all been reviewed and updated in preparation for the new Council in 2025.

The Board had no questions or comments.

### 6.2 Report from Trade Union Committee meeting in March 2024

The report had been received and noted.

The Wales member on the Trade Union Committee advised that Jenny Watts has been appointed as the National Officer for GP practices.



There are plans in place to improve the Case Management System (CMS) and the authentication process will be improved.

A new process will be in place to withdraw access to CMS and RCN systems for any representative not updating GDPR training within three months of the reminder.

**6.3 Report from Professional Nursing Committee meetings held in March, May and July 2024**

The reports had been received and noted.

In the absence of the Professional Nursing Committee member for Wales, there were no comments from the Board.

**6.4 Report from UK Reps Committee meetings held in June and July 2024**

The reports had been received and noted.

**6.5 Report from Student Committee meeting held in April 2024**

The report had been received and noted.

**7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business to raise.

The Chair closed the open session at 1:10pm.