

RCN Forum Annual Report 2023

Forum Name:

Older People's Forum

Introduction:

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

Membership of the forum

The Older People's Forum has a total of 11,567 members. The forum began 2023 under the leadership of chair (Gary Mitchell) who was elected to the position unopposed in 2022. Through 2023, the Older People's Forum received resignations from one of their six committee members. The one member departed in December 2022, meaning the forum has operated below capacity for the entirety of 2023.

In Autumn 2023, the Older People's Forum advertised two vacancies. Seven applicants applied for these vacancies and five were shortlisted. Two additional committee members were recruited to the forum and will formally take on the role in January 2023. These two committee members will work alongside current committee members (Sandra Blades, Stephanie Craig, Jane Murray, Maritess Murdoch & Gary Mitchell).

Reflections on 2023: (Outputs and outcomes)

The strategy for 2023 was one of recovery as the speciality of older people's nursing was significantly impacted during the pandemic, which has influenced output from the Forum. The workplan focussed on how to support older people's services to recover post-pandemic.

- The forum was also invited to speak at two Westminster Health Forum policy meetings on; dementia care and end-of-life care in 2023.
<https://www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk/conferences/westminster-health-forum>
- The Forum is also represented on Queen's Nursing Institute (QNI), Daffodil Standards and falls prevention networks by committee members.
- Throughout 2023, committee members played an integral part in the co-development of a restrictive practice digital education tool for care home nurses and are acknowledged for their role:
<https://play.restrictivepractice.co.uk/>
- The Forum did not submit any FGG project bids this year and have been delayed in the delivery of a suite of podcasts that were planned to illuminate care of older people's nursing. The forum has now recorded three audio podcasts, and these will be released throughout winter 2023. The podcasts focus on loneliness/meaningful activity, living well in older age and restrictive practice.
- The Forum had developed a series of five online seminars to be delivered throughout the spring of 2023, but these were also postponed by the college due to trade union activity. This will be picked up in 2024.

- At Congress 2023, the Forum participated in two health and wellbeing activities. The forum also seconded two emergency items at congress in relation to 1) calling for the installation of a commissioner for older people in England/Wales to mirror Scotland/Northern Ireland and 2) lobbying for a dementia specific regional policy in England. Both motions were overwhelmingly successful and supported by Congress.
- In September 2023, the forum produced a suite of six blogs that were published throughout dementia awareness month. These are housed on the forum's website.
- With regards to social media, our closed Facebook has grown by approx. 100 members to 1100+ members. Our care home network has been rebranded by the college to Care Home and Social Care Nursing Network. This social media channel has grown by 65 people to 885 members.
- Our Twitter channel has been curated by Steph Craig from the forum and its growth has been by more than 100 members to approx. 2100 members.
- Due to the work demands of forum colleagues, ill-health and a reduced capacity in forum members, we have had more limited outputs in 2023. We will be meeting in January 2024 to ensure that we have a firm and deliverable action plan for 2024.

RCN Representation

The Older People's Forum provided two presentations at Westminster Health Forum on behalf of the College in the areas of 'dementia care' and 'palliative and end-of-life care'. One colleague from the RCN Older People's Forum also provided a guest lecture about dementia friendliness at a regional nursing conference in Gurnsey in June 2023. Further, one colleague has continued to represent the forum on the Daffodil standards group for quality improvement in palliative care.

Contribution to Consultations/Policy development

Support to the College in NICE Consultation on Delirium: Diagnosis, Management and Treatment Guidance. This was published at the end of January 2023.

Plans for 2023:

Deliverables for 2024 include:

1. A series of audio podcasts to profile older people's nursing.
2. A series of blogs from committee and forum members.
3. A series of online seminars about older people's nursing across the 4 countries.

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By: Gary Mitchell (Chair of Older People's Forum)