The Branch has been very active in the first few months of 2017. The Branch provided a resource stand and sent representatives to both the Epsom and St Helier Hospitals Health and well-being days. More details and photos can be found on page 5.

On February 7th we had our first Branch meeting of the year. Branch chair Mike Smith gave members an update of what was happening across the region with regard to local and regional challenges, Representatives from the Board and Croydon Hospital fed back on activities in their area and members from the independent sector were invited to share issues that affected them. There was much discussion about recruitment, retention of staff, stress in the workplace and the prospect of more cuts and changes through the Government's plans for saving money across London.

We then welcomed Mr Bernell Bussue, RCN Regional Director for London. Bernell explained what the likely impact of NHS Sustainability and Transfer plans (STP's) were likely to be both locally, regionally and nationally for England. Whilst some positive things were contained in the ideas it was hard to see how they will work given the unprecedented challenges placed on the NHS currently and talk of one local hospital having to close. Bernell shared the local STP plan with members present and gave an informative power point assisted talk about how we could be affected locally. Worth our members finding out what is proposed in SW London. Click here to find out more http://www.swlccgs.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/SWL-Five-Year-Forward-Plan-21-October-2016.pdf

Branch meetings are also the opportunity for local members to get active in their local workplaces either as stewards, health and safety reps or learning reps. During the meeting we had expressions of interest from Sandra O'Connor, a back care nurse specialist at Epsom and St Helier to become a health and safety rep. Meanwhile Sutton Community senior nurse Kim Lewin volunteered to become active as a steward and the Branch elected her unopposed. If you want to get active and develop your career at the same time speak to any of the Activists listed on the last page or look at the web site - link https://www.rcn.org.uk/get-involved/rcn-reps
Autumn of Learning success

Our last meeting of the year was the Autumn of Learning Event at Sutton hospital, which attracted 72 delegates with some very positive feedback afterwards. Across London there were five similar events and we understand from region that we were the most popular event in London, in terms of numbers.

Top flight speakers included Dr Heather Hawksley talking about managing chronic pain; Amena Warner, Head of Clinical Services at Allergy UK as well as being a branch member. Chief Nurse, Charlotte Hall spoke of how she manages a busy Trust from a nursing perspective; Ajay Boodhoo clinical nurse specialist for neurology at Croydon spoke on improving neurological patient care whilst Carey Johnson, Sickle Cell nurse specialist at East London NHS Trust gave delegates an update of how this debilitating condition is being effectively managed using various clinical methods.

The free event included refreshments throughout the days courtesy of the inner and outer SW London Branches. Additionally stalls from sponsors Liverpool Victoria, the RCN, Epsom & St Helier Bank and Allergy UK ensured that delegates had plenty to reflect on and put in their portfolios for Revalidation.

Thanks to all the speakers and organisers/helpers who gave up their time to make this free event so successful.

Autumn of Learning Event - Joint free study day with Inner Cotswold Road, SM2 5NF.
Friday 25th November

Theme for the day: Developing knowledge and skills for improved nursing practice

Timetable for the Day

09.30 – 10.00 Coffee and Registration
10.00 – 10.15 Introductions and Housekeeping – Mike Smith, Branch Chair
Message and welcome from Cynthia Davis, RCN London Board Chair and Council member
10.15 – 11.00 Session 1 Managing Chronic Pain – Heather Hawksley, Lead Nurse for Chronic pain, Epsom & St Helier University Hospital NHS Trust
11.00 – 11.30 Session 2 RCN benefits of membership – things you may not know – Alison Telfer/Bernell Bussue, RCN London Regional Director
11.30 – 11.45 Comfort break and cold drinks
11.45 – 12.30 Session 3 Managing Medicine Allergies and other common types of Allergies – Amena Warner – Head of Clinical Services at Allergy UK
12.30 – 13.30 Free Lunch and Exhibition viewing
13.30 – 14.00 Session 4 Insights into Managing the Nursing Team and beyond in a busy hospital setting – Charlotte Hall – Director of Nursing, Epsom & St Helier University Hospital NHS Trust
14.00 – 14.45 Session 5 Modern Approaches to Sickle Cell Management and Treatments – Carey Johnson, Sickle Cell Clinical Nurse Specialist, East London NHS Foundation Trust
14.45 – 15.00 Comfort break
15.00 – 15.30 Session 6 Neurological Care – improving nursing practice – Ajay Boodhoo, Lead neurology nurse specialist, Croydon University Hospital Trust
15.30 – 15.40 Closing remarks Cynthia and Mike, certificate of attendance and evaluations sheets
London Region
Celebrate Centenary
in Style and form a
new Board

Back in November several hundred London RCN members attended the last centenary event at the London Assembly. Speakers included Dame Floella Benjamin, RCN president Cecilia Anim, Members of the London Assembly who kindly hosted the event and our very own Bernell Bussue, regional Director. Cecilia Anim has been awarded a CBE in the Queen’s New Year’s honours list 2017.

The central location of the Assembly afforded spectacular views of nighttime London and guests were entertained by a jazz band. Amongst the guests was Sheila Franks (top right pic) who has been an RCN member for over 70 years and thought to be the longest serving member in the London region. Ms Franks was presented with a bouquet of flowers and she in turn shared a book of memories over the years.

The London RCN Board met (pictured right) in January with several new members. This was a training and orientation day for new members. The refreshed Board brings a broad range of nursing experience across both independent and NHS sectors and the new members certainly seemed up for the challenges before them. Selven Armon remains our local rep on the Board.
Congress items - The Branch has submitted three potential Congress agenda items on behalf of the Branch

1. That this meeting of RCN Congress discusses the impact of leaving the European Union on employment rights and legislation across the UK.

Supporting information: Background - Professional concerns about the loss of significant employment rights gains that continue to accrue to UK workers as a result of our EU membership. These are wide ranging in scope, including access to paid annual holidays, improved health and safety protection, rights to unpaid parental leave, rights to time off work for urgent family reasons, equal treatment rights for part-time, fixed-term and agency workers, rights for outsourced workers, and rights for workers’ representatives to receive information and be consulted.

2. That this meeting of RCN Congress asks Council to lobby governments to speed up legislation to tackle the nationwide obesity crisis.

Supporting information: Background: In the March 2016 budget the Government announced plans to introduce a sugar tax to tackle childhood obesity, but not to come into effect until 2018. Much more could be done to promote healthier eating such as unhealthy food taxes subsidising healthier produce, or banning adverts that target children with unhealthy snacks. Sugar Tax [https://www.rcn.org.uk/news-and-events/news/childhood-obesity-plans-storing-up-problems-for-years-to-come](https://www.rcn.org.uk/news-and-events/news/childhood-obesity-plans-storing-up-problems-for-years-to-come)

3. That this meeting of RCN Congress asks Council to lobby both local and national government to ensure that the voice of nursing is represented in all 44 English sustainability and transformation plans (STP’s) and any ongoing STP schemes.

Supporting information: Background - In December 2015 NHS England issued guidance that completely changed how the NHS in England is organised. The aim of the STP programme is to bring local health and care leaders organisations and communities together to develop plans for their localities or ‘footprint’ areas to develop a holistic approach to meeting the health and care needs of a whole population rather than users of individual services or organisations.

We have four voting places for Congress 2017 in Liverpool. The Executive team has met to discuss who of the seven applicants will have these voting places. The team recommended Jahmena Wilson as a representative of the independent sector
Helen Kerslake - as new activist / steward
Selven Armen as our Board member and active steward
Ajay Boodhoo - as a new learning rep,

To book your place go to [https://www.rcn.org.uk/congress](https://www.rcn.org.uk/congress)
Pay: The pay Review body reports in February with a decision on pay expected in March. The Health Service Journal (HSJ) recently stated that 96% shifts below acceptable safe staffing levels. There were 24000 official vacancies in April 2016 (last available government figures) CPI 1.8% now, but was 1.9% at time of submission so the joint union negotiation body asked for 1.9 + 1%. There was also a request for parity for all four UK countries with Scotland which enjoys higher pay rates.

There was a Parliamentary lobby 30 Jan A number of MPs spoke directly about their experience of meeting RCN members who took part in the lobby of Parliament earlier in the day. MPs from both sides made reference the RCN's Scrap the cap campaign.

There was general cross party consensus for the Government to end its policy of pay restraint from those in attendance, with significant contributions from a number of Conservative MPs including Dan Poulter, Richard Fuller and Andrew Selous. Responding for the Opposition, Shadow Health Minister Justin Madders said that pay restraint is a political choice. He also said the Government had made the wrong call to remove the NHS bursary for nursing students in England.

Croydon News

Croydon Health services have been taken out of Financial Special Measures after just seven months, NHS Improvement (NHSI) has announced. 

NHSI said Croydon had made “significant improvements” in their financial position. The intervention by NHSI meant that each Trust was given intense scrutiny and tougher targets in order to turnaround rising financial deficits. At the same time, they had to maintain quality and meet national standards for planned operations and cancer care, along with agreed trajectories for emergency care.

The CEO - John Goulston said: “To exit financial special measures in just seven months is to the credit of our staff who, along with the Trust Board, have worked tirelessly to find ways to increase efficiency and put forward ideas to cut costs without compromising care.

“Our greatest asset will always be our staff – our workforce is also where we spend the majority of our budget. To continue our financial recovery we must work harder to limit our use of expensive temporary staff through continued efforts to recruit, such as the 30 new nurses and midwives who recently joined the Trust.

Next meeting will be on Wednesday 26th April at St Helier, Nonsuch Room 7-9pm. We will have a clinical update about diabetes with lead Diabetes nurse Sarah Jupp.

We kick started the year with two health and well-being events at Epsom on 27th January and St Helier on February 3rd. ESTH staff were able to get free health MOT’s, cholesterol, BP, BMI and other checks done. We provided a stand and we manned one of the health stations. Thanks to Paula and Gerry for helping out at those events, which were visited by several hundred staff and promoted RCN activities within the Trust.
Here to Help ~ Useful Names + Numbers

The Branch is run by volunteer local nurses and the current branch team are:

Chair & Publicity lead - Mike Smith (07930 410386) RN (ESH)
Secretary – Ajay Boodhoo - Neurology Nurse Specialist, (CUH)
Treasurer – Gerry Cotter (01372 735279) (ESH)
Recruitment - Joan Chappel (ESH)
Learning & Development - Sheila Gooljar

Local RCN Stewards

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<td>Mike Smith (ESH)*</td>
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<td>Gerry Cotter (ESH)</td>
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<td>David Simpson (Independent Sector)</td>
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<td>Selven Armon (CUH)</td>
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<td>Helen Kerslake (ESH)</td>
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Health & Safety Reps

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<td>Sandra O’Connor (in training)</td>
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<td>Jenny Broom (ESH)</td>
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<td>Lynette Drakes (ESH)</td>
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Learning Reps

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<td>Ajay Boodhoo (CUH)</td>
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Full time officers

Paula Delaney, Judith Janes, Trish Davis & Julie Mulvey based in London Regional Office covering Merton & Sutton, Croydon & SW London

RCN Council Members for London
Cynthia Davis, Dr Matthew Hodson
Regional Board Member
Selven Armon

*CUH - Croydon University Hospital
*ESH - Epsom and St Helier
* Community CCG’s - covering Merton & Sutton, Surrey Downs

RCN London Region, 5th Floor, 20 Cavendish Square,
London W1G 0RN Tel. 0345 458 6968
Director of London Region
Mr Bernell Bussue

Raising concerns, raising standards (Whistleblowing) helpline for RCN members: 0345 772 6300
RCN Member Support Services 0345 408 4391.
The service offers guidance on benefit entitlement, money advice, counselling and careers.

RCN Foundation - bursaries, project grants and help for times of need or hardship - go to www.rcnfoundation.org.uk 0207 647 3645

Branch meeting dates for 2017:

- Wednesday 26th April Branch meeting Nonsuch Room, St Helier 19:00 - 21:00hrs
- Thursday 11th May - Nurses Day Celebrations - Epsom Hospital afternoon
- Congress 13th - 17th May Liverpool
- Monday 3rd July - Branch meeting Croydon University Hospital PGMC 19:00 - 21:00hrs - with Curry meal
- Monday 9th October AGM and Branch meeting Epsom 19:00 - 21:00hrs
- Friday 24th November joint AOL event with Inner SW London Branch - all day around St George’s? (tbc)

We welcome feedback from local members and the contribution of short articles for this quarterly newsletter. Please contact Mike Smith, Branch chair on his work e-mail address michael.smith@esth.nhs.uk