

Follow-up email to the Chair of the Committee from RCN Scotland on their current priorities and their calling for a clear timetable for implementation of the Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act

Dear Mr Wishart,

Theresa Fyffe, RCN Scotland Director, greatly appreciated the opportunity to engage with members of the Scottish Affairs Committee at the recent evidence session examining the experience of key health and care workers during the pandemic. We hope you found the session useful and please don't hesitate to get in touch if you would like any further information on the pressures faced by RCN members and how the pandemic has affected the professional lives of nursing staff.

We thought it would be helpful to follow-up with you to share a little more information about RCN's Scotland current priorities. In addition to our ongoing work highlighting the concerns of members around the COVID-19 pandemic with employers and government and ensuring that remobilisation and recovery are taken forward safely, we are focused on the urgent need for action to address the shortage of nursing staff across the whole of the health and care system. This includes giving nursing staff a meaningful pay rise.

The pandemic has starkly highlighted and increased the pressures facing nursing staff, whether they be in hospitals, care homes, in the community, or across the wider health and care sector. Nursing is a safety critical profession and while staff have been redeployed or stepped forward from studies or retirement, the situation is untenable with the profession facing severe staff shortages. The toll on nursing staff wellbeing is now very clear. Fears over health and safety and stress levels have increased since the start of the pandemic, while staffing levels and the ability to take breaks have worsened. To ensure nursing is an attractive career choice and to recognise the skill, responsibilities and clinical expertise of the current nursing workforce, the RCN is calling for an immediate pay rise for nursing staff in the NHS across the UK. You can find out more about our Fair Pay for Nursing campaign [here](#).

In Scotland we are also calling for a clear timetable for implementation of the Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act, including Part 3 which covers the care sector. Safe and effective staffing is a key element of remobilising the NHS safely and ensuring that Scotland's care homes can safely deliver care to residents with increasingly complex health needs.

Please get in touch if you would like to arrange a meeting to discuss any of these issues further.

Kind regards,

Niki Stark

Senior Public Affairs Officer

RCN Scotland

25 September 2020