

EDI Committee Agenda

Date: 19 June 2024

Time: 11:13 - 16:00

Venue: Sarah Swift (G01) - RCN HQ, 20 Cavendish Square, London
W1G 0RN

Time	No.	Item	Information
11:30	1.	Welcome and Introduction <i>Patricia Mbasani, Chief People Officer</i>	
12:00	2.	Induction to the RCN <i>Jenny Nicholas, Governance Secretariat Manager</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Governance of the RCN ▪ Role and purpose of the committees ▪ Relationship of the committees to Council ▪ Scheme of delegation ▪ Relationship with country and regional Boards ▪ Governance and culture review ▪ Declarations of interest 	(Verbal Report)
12:30	3.	Summary of the Governance Reviews <i>Natalie Zara, Executive Director of Governance</i>	(Verbal Report)

Lunch 13:30 - 14:15

14:15	4.	Development of the RCN Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy <i>Wendy Irwin, Diversity and Equalities Co-ordinator</i>	(Pages 3 - 17)
15:15	5.	Review terms of reference <i>Natalie Zara, Executive Director of Governance</i>	(Pages 18 - 23)

15:45	6.	Any other business	
16:00		Close of meeting	

Date of next meeting: Wednesday, 31 July 2024

Membership: Jane Cantrell, Jackie Davies, Lauren Healan, Lucy Kallen, Roger Kline (External Adviser), Alison Paterson, Melvish Shaffi-Ajibola (External Adviser), Sandra-Jane Stock, Paul Vaughan (Council Member - Northern), Sarah Walsh (RCNi Board of Directors Representative) and Stephen Watson (Council Member - Wales)



Royal College
of Nursing

Our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy



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Equity is our clear ambition; diversity is our underused asset; inclusion is our future.



Introduction from Professor Nicola Ranger

Acting RCN General Secretary and Chief Executive

The proposals in the next few pages mark the start of a long journey for the College. And one that, if you're getting it right, you should never be able to mark as 'complete'. An organisation as proud and large as the Royal College of Nursing must never rest on its laurels and appear to be, at best, out of touch or, at worst, wilfully negligent.

The College has fallen short in its past and I offer, from the RCN, an unreserved apology.

We are changing as an organisation but our members, staff and all stakeholders have to feel the benefits of that before they believe it. The principles and specific areas of work outlined here are not a comprehensive list of what we will do. Instead, after listening to members' voices – their stories and lived experiences of nursing, their places of work and being in membership of the RCN – it is hopefully a display of clear intent on our part.

Equity is our clear ambition; diversity is our underused asset; inclusion is our future.

Within days of this strategy being released, a new leadership committee dedicated to this agenda will sit for the first time and hold the College to account on delivery of it.

Through the measures outlined, and many others to come, every leader will take clear accountability for equity, diversity and inclusion. We will advocate more clearly and more successfully for all people in our membership. The College will be diverse in its leadership and governance to show the change and drive it further forward. We will use our strong, powerful, political voice on the widest range of issues that affect the greatest number of our members. And we will fight with conviction to change the working environments of nursing staff as well as lift the standards in their professional union.

I am grateful to our strategic partners in this work, Half the Sky, for their advice, research and thorough engagement of our membership. We can say that, like our main RCN strategy, this piece of work has been co-produced with the nursing staff who are invested in its success – that is our only route to meaningful change. And it is their views and experiences that I will continue to seek in the years ahead as we chart this new path together. We must stay the course.

I thank everybody who contributed personally or in group sessions and who will continue to give so much to the life of this College.

Professor Nicola Ranger
Acting RCN General Secretary
and Chief Executive

A diverse and inclusive Royal College of Nursing

We are proud that you are reading the RCN Group Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy. It lays out the actions that we are committed to taking over the next 5 years to encourage greater inclusion, representation of diversity, and equitable support in meeting the needs of our membership across the UK.

In addition to this overarching Group strategy, both RCNi and the RCN Foundation who, along with the College form the RCN Group, will progress their individual and bespoke equity, diversity and inclusion action plans and initiatives.

The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) has been in existence for over 100 years and is the Voice of Nursing. As the world's largest nursing union and professional body, we represent the nursing profession, and promote the art and science of nursing.

While this has been at the heart of the College's purpose since inception, the demographic make-up, depth of expertise and experience, and breadth of the practices within workplaces where members deliver their services has continually evolved over time. The RCN continues to develop and respond to the needs of members against a backdrop of shifting societal norms, expectations, and values.

For many years across the UK, the nursing workforce has been one of the most diverse within the health care professions with representation spanning all protected characteristics. This diversity is also reflected in the make-up of over half a million RCN members, but this does not yet adequately translate across all the various governance or leadership structures within the College.

In 2023 we launched a 5-year strategic plan A New Dawn for Nursing: 2023-2027, and our commitment to EDI threads throughout.

This strategy serves as a response to the challenges that have been highlighted in reviews of our governance and culture and provides an opportunity for us to recommit and realign our efforts to put equitable experiences for all members at the heart of what we do.

We have developed this strategy in close collaboration with members in recent years and particularly in January to March 2024. Our aim with its publication is to provide a future-focused starting point for the changes to our infrastructure and practices that will be necessary to achieve our ambition.



What does the RCN 5-year strategy A New Dawn for Nursing say on the equity, diversity and inclusivity agenda?



We will build a culture that champions equity, diversity and inclusion. We will support and develop our members and staff and learn from reviews, reports and member feedback. The RCN Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (EDI) will set out a pathway for improvement across our membership. This strategy will be the catalyst for us to enable reform and become more inclusive in everything we do. We will challenge all inequity and discrimination and bring about a cultural change which empowers everyone. We will build an inclusive organisation which fosters a sense of belonging. We all have a responsibility to make this change happen. Over the next 5 years we will change our infrastructure and

take practical action to address all the concerns that have been raised. To achieve this ambition, minimise any risk and strengthen assurance for delivery, we will prioritise our actions by focusing on accountability, leadership, metrics, narrative, and voice. Structuring the EDI strategy in this way will provide focus and needs deliberate and collective effort. This strategic plan will equip leaders and managers with skills to support their teams, measure progress, enhance leadership and engender civility and respect to all.

We appreciate that what we know in 2023 will not be the same in 2027, so the EDI strategy is underpinned by plans and actions that will be kept under review by various groups and bodies

throughout the next 5 years. We will put robust monitoring practices and processes in place to measure the changing landscape. We will be led by the latest research and best practice, as well as feedback and intelligence, so we constantly improve and extend the reach and impact of this strategy throughout this period. Leadership at all levels remains integral to the delivery and implementation of the strategic plan. Leadership will need to be visible and evident in the action plans that will be developed by governors and staff throughout the organisation. We know this work will be challenging but we are committed to transforming the RCN from a non-discriminatory, non-racist organisation to an anti-discriminatory and anti-racist one.

Our ambition

The RCN Group will be the exemplar nursing union and professional body embedding consideration, reflection and impactful action on equity, diversity, and inclusion into all decisions and activity.

The aim of this strategy is to ensure that the RCN Group works tirelessly to build an organisation where inequity, discrimination, and racism are eliminated within the organisation and proactively challenged on behalf of our members externally as a part of the College's fabric.

It became clear throughout the member engagement process that for EDI to become a core element of the RCN offering for members, the articulation of the commitments and activities required a direct link back to what it would mean. An articulation of what would feel and be different for members if the strategy is executed successfully and, for the exercise we grouped the activity under these broad headings.

- Advocate for me
- Connect me
- Understand me
- Develop me

- Reflect me
- Support me
- Strengthen the RCN for me

Equity, diversity and inclusion will be actively championed by everyone irrespective of seniority, job title, location, or role. Value will be placed on every member voice and even when there are differences of opinion, meaningful respect will be given to the experiences of others.

At the centre of this ambition is ensuring that everyone has the freedom, opportunity, and space to belong within the College and be represented in our governance structures.

Over the next 5 years, this will mean change to meet the ambition to be a wholly inclusive union and professional body. This will be a journey and require input and action from everyone along the way.



Where we started

There has been good work and EDI progress happening in pockets, such as the development of informal member networks and the Cultural Ambassador Programme but this has not necessarily had the widespread level of impact that we would want for all members across all communities.

However, some members report inequitable experiences with the RCN and having listened to a cross-section of members and reflected on our journey thus far, we want to do better.

It is important to be honest and truthful in recognising that the desire now to ensure a new strategy and a group-wide deep focus on equity, diversity and inclusion has been triggered by a multitude of factors. Providing piecemeal interventions will no longer serve the level of ambition that we have.

Challenges in applying an EDI lens to our governance structures and the culture of our decision making have been highlighted in reviews, and insights from segments of our membership signals that some members cannot wholeheartedly say the RCN best represents them or addresses their needs.

In 2021, we sought a wide-ranging and external review of our culture and decision-making processes. A KPMG report on governance processes within the RCN was followed by an independent review into the culture of the RCN by Bruce Carr KC.

Congress debates have also mandated RCN Council to drive forward change, eradicating discrimination and complacency at every level. In 2023, Congress voted that the RCN should be an anti-racist and anti-discriminatory organisation, actively transforming the unequal social and workplace relations that shape our interactions.

While there is a lot of good work happening, the organisational governance and representation data, and membership sentiment suggest that there is a lack of confidence in us to tackle issues in this space. This strategy is the start of changing that perception through real commitment.

We aim to elevate the focus on EDI in a tangible and meaningful way with a strategy that means that things feel and are experienced differently for members going forward.

While we know that cultural and systemic change takes time, this strategy helps us to definitively move closer to addressing these concerns in words but more importantly, through action.

By the end of the 5-year strategy, if we have delivered what we set out to do, then the organisation will be known for taking an active stance against both institutional and individual acts of discrimination in all forms. We will have used the full extent of our influence across the health and care sector to encourage employers to build inclusive, anti-racist and anti-discriminatory organisations. We will have supported our members to be skilful and confident in asserting their workplace rights for themselves and others as allies to marginalised, underrepresented or excluded individuals.

This strategy continues the journey towards becoming a more diverse, inclusive, and reflective membership organisation that truly understands and represents the voices of our over half a million members.

A foundation for reform

We recognise the urgency of the issues in this space. In this EDI strategy, we have set a clear direction to ensure that they are being addressed and solutions are being implemented across the entirety of the RCN.

Building on reviews of the recent past and the experiences of those impacted by the work of the RCN, this strategy lays foundations for cultural reform in a way that facilitates a sense of belonging for our members. Where the focus shifts from discussion to action and is meaningful in influencing how members experience the RCN.

Over the next 5 years, this strategy will serve as the catalyst to help us work towards incrementally shifting the infrastructure, policies, and practices to enhance our approach to equity, diversity and inclusion.

Ultimately, we acknowledge that now is the time for change so that across the RCN Group we can prioritise our efforts to tackle discrimination, inequity and inequality and lean into more favourable outcomes for all our diverse groups and members.

We will seek to understand, and we will work in unity with our members because we know how much this matters to them. Along the way, we will continue to learn and continue to improve as we endeavour to continually evolve and ensure our journey goes from non-discrimination to anti-discrimination across all characteristics.

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Our focus must shift from discussion to action that is meaningful in how members experience the RCN.

A collaborative process

This strategy has been developed building on previous member engagement and through a collaborative and iterative process. This is to ensure that the opinions, perspectives, and voices of as many members as possible could contribute towards shaping a future-focused strategy.

This work commenced in December 2023, and invited contribution via these fora and mechanisms:

- Member networks and communities:
 - » BME Group
 - » Student Committee
 - » Nursing Support Workers Committee
 - » Neurodiversity Network
 - » Wider Disability Network
- RCN Council and Executive leadership
- RCN Regional Directors and Associate Directors
- RCN Fellows
- Professional Nursing Committee and Trade Union Committee
- Over 100 RCN members in representative roles from every part of the UK and all care settings
- Forum chairs
- Over 1,000 direct inputs from individual members
- Member participation in 12 all-member webinars across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Our definitions

Having a shared understanding of what EDI means is important to ensuring transparency in our strategy. We are working with the following definitions:

Equity

Equity recognises that to reach equal outcomes individuals need different levels and kinds of support.

Equality means each individual or group is given the same resources or opportunities.

Diversity

Diversity is the range of people in an organisation or profession. For example, this means people of different age, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexuality and people with disabilities.

Representation of the diversity of people in an organisation or profession refers to how those different perspectives, experiences, and issues are understood, and are making meaningful contributions at every level.

Inclusion

Inclusion is about a sense of belonging to – and being valued by – an organisation or profession. It is the recognition of how well the thoughts, contributions, presence and perspectives of different people are actively valued and integrated into a working environment. An inclusive workplace is characterised by active cultures, processes and practices which enable individuals and groups to perform at their highest levels as a result of being psychologically safe, free from discrimination, properly supported, empowered to collaborate and inspired to innovate.

Anti-racism

Anti-racism is the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes that promote racial equity in society.



Our priorities

Following consultation with members we identified 5 strategic priorities for action.

Leaders taking accountability for EDI

Ensuring advocacy for all member voices

Facilitating support and collaboration across all communities

Encouraging diverse representation in governance

Creating inclusive workplaces for all members



Support development of coherent resources to assist us to be effective in our inclusivity. We want to know how to address issues.

RCN member, Northern Ireland

Leaders take accountability for EDI

What will change?

This priority focuses on leadership at every level within the RCN and ensures full responsibility for developing and sustaining effective EDI activity within each leader’s area of operation. This priority seeks to provide our members with the assurance that EDI activity is being fully integrated within both strategic and operational activity across the RCN Group. To highlight the work taking place, an annual EDI progress report to members will be published to demonstrate its enhanced prioritisation.

Ensuring advocacy for all member voices

What will change?

The importance of EDI will be embedded into every action, initiative, case work or idea generated by the RCN. The RCN will advocate on EDI policy and practice issues impacting the nursing workforce. It aims to ensure that the full diversity of member voices are truly acknowledged and that members have full confidence that they will be appropriately responded to.

Facilitating support and collaboration across all communities

What will change?

This priority sees the RCN actively embracing, recognising, and celebrating difference and varied experiences across the nursing profession. The RCN recognises the power of belonging and potential strength that integrated communities bring within the RCN structure. The development of identity-based EDI networks with strong links to a dedicated EDI Committee will form a critical part of the delivery of this priority.

Encouraging diversity of representation in governance

What will change?

The RCN will explore a wide range of models that significantly widen access to the full range of RCN governance roles by removing barriers to participation. This means we will find a wide range of interventions and systemic inclusive design to encourage the full diversity of our membership to put themselves forward for governance roles. We will also support those in existing governance positions to understand the importance of placing EDI at the heart of governance and decision-making. This will be characterised by embedding inclusive governance principles and support that enables questioning, robust debate, self-reflection and respectful challenge to enable everyone to make constructive use of their differing perspectives.

Creating an inclusive workplace for all members.

What will change?

The RCN will support members in their own workplaces by empowering them to demand and role-model inclusive working practices. We will provide tools and other resources to our members to challenge discrimination and promote anti-discriminatory approaches as well as anti-racism in their own workplaces. This priority aims to increase confidence and support our organising trade union model.



Ensure that the leadership is diverse, that the RCN is vocal in its support for EDI, that members are educated in EDI and that the RCN campaigns for the rights of its members.

RCN member, England



Lobby the government, all NHS organisations and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to take EDI seriously... holding employers to account on their commitment to EDI and making sure that accurate, effective and timely policies are in place for managers to assist members ... the RCN could advocate for improved awareness of EDI from the top down.

RCN member, England



Taking action

The tables overleaf show our commitments for activity under each of the priority headings. They also show alignment with the RCN's 5 strategic pillars, demonstrating how our EDI strategy is integral to the work of the College as a whole.

For ease, we have incorporated the majority of member recommendations into the scope of the 5 priority areas initially identified through consultation with members.

Some of the described actions are already underway within the organisation. These have been included to show that we are committed to continuing working on them and to ensure we can be held accountable for completing them.

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Ensure that boards and leadership posts reflect nursing as a whole...all this work without representation is not enough. We must actively seek out diverse perspectives in our decision-making processes.

RCN member, England

Leaders take accountability for EDI

These actions are intended to support leadership at every level of the RCN taking responsibility for EDI activity. To support that ambition, some of the actions are designed to support the RCN to develop better insight into the needs and experiences of members.

“ Get in touch with the members, conduct surveys and gather information, act in accordance with the findings. **”**
 RCN member, Wales

We will...	Outcome	Strategic plan pillar
Revise our equality monitoring and data capture by collecting data on all protected characteristics across all countries in the UK.	Enhanced data on the diversity of our members will support better-quality decision making.	Accountability Metrics
Publish an EDI annual report to members highlighting activity and outcomes. This will include any benchmarking activity in support of the transformative anti-racism work.	Members have both assurance and transparency on the RCN's activity and performance on EDI across the RCN Group.	Accountability Leadership Metrics Narrative
Embed equity impact analysis within decision making.	All decision makers have an understanding how their operation impacts across the RCN's diverse membership.	Accountability Leadership Metrics
Conduct regular data collection, analysis, and reporting across all protected characteristics in all countries in the UK.	The RCN understands its member make-up and takes action to ensure that there is no significant difference between and within groups in relation to their levels of satisfaction and representation within the RCN and wider group structure.	Accountability Leadership Metrics
Review our structures, policies and processes to effectively design out racism and all forms of discrimination as part of our anti-racism and broader anti-discrimination commitments.	The RCN will review its policies to eliminate discrimination in all forms.	Accountability Leadership Metrics Narrative Voice

We will...	Outcome	Strategic plan pillar
Develop our case management system to enable reports exposing patterns of discrimination in case data to better challenge employers and support members.	The RCN is more able to identify systemic or repetitive discrimination and better challenge it within workplaces.	Accountability Leadership Metrics Narrative
Apply consequences and follow the established complaints process across membership, boards, branches, committees, and Council if our Respect Charter is not upheld by an individual or community.	Members notice the RCN Respect Charter being taken seriously and the process for breaches or complaints applied transparently and consistently.	Accountability Leadership
Host regular events for members to give feedback to RCN senior leadership across the UK on EDI-focused matters.	Members are able to provide feedback to decision makers across the UK.	Accountability Leadership

Ensuring advocacy for all member voices

These actions seek to ensure that the diverse experiences of RCN members are fully understood and carefully curated, shared in ways that prompt positive change and achieve better outcomes for nursing. They ensure that we engage with our membership to carry out important research that shares critical insight on experiences of our diverse membership.

We will...	Outcome	Strategic plan pillar
Build a strong evidence base on EDI which enables influential research and publication of reports on the lived experiences of members – representing all protected characteristics – that seek to prompt systemic change across the breadth of the health and social care sectors in order to improve their outcomes and experiences.	Members notice the RCN voice on the specific lived and intersectional experiences that they face and reflecting their prescriptions of system change across the wider health sector.	Leadership Narrative Voice
Promote the Voice of Nursing on external social justice issues (such as addressing the gender, disability and race pay gaps across the nursing profession and the impact of immigration changes on internationally-educated nurses).	Members recognise the RCN voice through policy positions supporting EDI issues that impact nursing.	Leadership Narrative Voice
Incorporate EDI into trade union collective bargaining as well as lobbying activity.	Members notice that EDI issues are elevated to a higher level within the trade union function.	Accountability Leadership Narrative Metrics Voice
Review the impact of all accredited representative roles (steward, learning rep, health, safety & wellbeing reps) in equality issues within workplaces.	Members witness that the RCN is reviewing and enhancing the role of all accredited reps in relation to equality issues.	Leadership Narrative Voice

We will...	Outcome	Strategic plan pillar
Influence the development of equality legislation and guidance to strengthen protection against discrimination.	Members notice that EDI issues are part of our parliamentary and public affairs activity.	Accountability Leadership Voice
Provide mandatory learning and development for all members in governance roles to enhance their understanding and capacity on EDI including anti-racism and intersectionality.	Members notice that decision-making is cognisant of the widest range of EDI issues.	Accountability Leadership Voice
Provide mandatory learning and development for all accredited representatives in order to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the wider EDI agenda including intersectionality and anti-racism.	RCN representatives' confidence to probe when engaging on discrimination as part of casework and when responding to member experiences is increased. Members from specific communities feel valued and understood.	Accountability Leadership Voice
Provide learning and development support for branches to engage with the EDI agenda at a grassroots level within workplaces.	RCN branch executive members feel increased confidence in working across the EDI agenda within the branch.	Accountability Leadership Voice
Campaign on behalf of internationally educated nurses to ensure they are not automatically placed at the bottom of the pay structure by default and overseas experience is recognised and rewarded.	These members will notice that we are advocating for their experience to be valued equally to their domestically educated counterparts.	Leadership Narrative Voice
Increase promotion and consider expansion of the Cultural Ambassador programme.	The RCN widens its scope and reach in confronting discrimination in key employment relations processes	Leadership Narrative

Facilitating support and collaboration across all communities

To ensure RCN members feel connected to each other and recognise the strength in shared experiences and self-organisation.

We will...	Outcome	Strategic plan pillar
Develop partnerships with external EDI networks and advocacy-related groups.	The RCN voice is amplified and strengthened by collaboration and connection with groups and organisations with similar goals.	Leadership Narrative Voice
Develop EDI member networks across various protected characteristics to support the EDI Committee.	Members are connected to share experiences, support and proactively work together on EDI issues. The EDI issues shape the governance agenda across the RCN Group	Leadership Voice
Develop a comprehensive learning programme for RCN members covering all the protected characteristics.	Members are supported to acquire the knowledge and skills to challenge exclusion and provide inclusion support.	Accountability Leadership Narrative Voice
Agree priorities for each EDI network and associated events.	Emergent EDI networks are able to share information on the lived experiences of members and their specific needs directly with RCN Council via the EDI committee.	Leadership Voice
Lobby employers across the health care sector to strengthen their support to internationally recruited nurses and provide comprehensive and ongoing support in relation to pay, terms and conditions.	International members feel better supported to settle into the UK.	Accountability Leadership Metrics Narrative



Provide support at local level to members who are struggling with inclusion in their workplaces that goes beyond direct discrimination. Host local events for members to discuss issues around equality both within the RCN and different workplaces.

RCN member, Scotland

We will...	Outcome	Strategic plan pillar
Develop a branded series of EDI events through webinars, conferences and seminars that support members to build their EDI knowledge and confidence.	Members apply this learning to their own practice in the workplace.	Leadership Narrative Voice
Build a definitive repository of best practice in reducing and eliminating health inequalities in nursing practice and build partnerships with organisations specialising in supporting underserved communities.	RCN members have access to a repository of knowledge about best practice in supporting communities with poorer health outcomes including trans, older people and gypsy and traveller communities as well as global majority communities.	Leadership
Ensure that the knowledge and nursing practice offering across the RCN Institute of Nursing Excellence has a defined EDI dimension and promotes the reduction of health inequalities across the 5 academies.	Recipients of all RCN academies' learning opportunities are empowered to embed EDI in all their nursing practice.	Leadership
Empower RCN representatives to share best practice and learnings in relation to EDI practice to continuously improve practice and outcomes.	Representatives have improved learning and support opportunities and deliver improved services and outcomes for members.	Leadership Voice
Develop an EDI toolkit for members which identifies key language and terminology as well as accessing support for achieving equity and inclusion outcomes.	Members have greater confidence in shaping inclusive culture demands from their employer.	Voice

Encouraging diversity of representation in governance

To ensure RCN members feel their voices, experiences and perspectives are reflected across the broad range of governance. Where there is a lack of representation, we will seek to explore ways to ensure that our governance roles fully reflect the diversity of our membership.

We will...	Outcome	Strategic plan pillar
Improve diverse participation – including assessing accessibility for participation and developing best practice guidance – at events and in our operational and governance activities by using positive action to address chronic under-representation and explore other models (e.g. reserved seats/constraints models) to sustainably attract the full diversity of RCN membership.	Our membership is reflected and represented in everything we do.	Accountability Leadership Voice
Research best practice and develop programmes, policies and positive action practices to increase the diversity of representation in member participation on RCN boards, committees, branches, and in other governance structures.	Our formal structures reflect and represent our membership and consider all our members’ experiences in their decision making.	Accountability Leadership Voice
Improve representation within governance roles at the branch level through the development of programmes and interventions aimed at removing barriers to participation and supporting engagement from the full diversity of our membership and targeting those who are currently under-represented.	Our formal structures reflect and represent our membership and consider all our members’ experiences in their decision making.	Accountability Leadership Voice
Implement a comprehensive outreach campaign to increase the diversity of membership across the UK.	Potential RCN members are made aware of the relevance of RCN membership in improving their outcomes and sense of belonging to the nursing family.	Leadership Narrative Voice

Creating an inclusive workplace for all members

Equipping RCN members with tools and resources to raise awareness about EDI-related issues and promote inclusion within their own workplaces.

We will...	Outcome	Strategic plan pillar
Develop a defined EDI Nursing Workforce Standard as a driver for delivering safe and effective care.	As an exemplar, the RCN sets the standard for EDI and supports and encourages others to meet it by providing clarity on the actions that employers must undertake to achieve an inclusive workplace.	Accountability Leadership Metrics Narrative Voice
Influence and lobby employers and governments to put in place effective inductions for internationally educated nursing staff, taking account of experience overseas.	As an exemplar, the RCN sets the standard for EDI and supports and encourages others to meet it.	Leadership Voice
Promote and build on resources and templates for members to help understand and advocate for inclusion in their workplaces.	Members have the necessary tools to proactively advocate for EDI in their workplace and drive forward positive change.	Leadership Voice
Develop guidance for members on key cultural and religious events and support their celebration.	Members feel a powerful sense of belonging and community from the RCN.	Leadership Narrative Voice
Provide structured learning and development for RCN staff to support members with equality issues.	RCN staff are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to conduct their day-to-day activities in a way that supports and promotes EDI.	Leadership Voice

How we will deliver our actions

We will focus on identifying the actions required to fulfil specific outcomes. We will develop a number of distinctive workstreams to fully resource this work and report regularly into RCN Council through the EDI Committee and provide the material for the annual EDI progress report.

Measuring our progress and impact

Our ultimate goal is to ensure that all members enjoy the highest levels of satisfaction and confidence in the RCN as their nursing union and professional body.

As is important throughout any organisational change journey, developing transparent measures ensures that progress can be regularly and effectively monitored. We will share our progress on an annual basis through the publication of an EDI annual report.

Each of the activities outlined in this strategy will have milestones and goals associated with them that will show how and when our goals will be reached. They will form part of a workplan, which sets out overall timeframes for the strategy.

Working groups and teams responsible for delivering the actions will report back regularly to the RCN leadership and ultimately to RCN Council through the new EDI Committee.

The strategy will also be reviewed on an ongoing basis allowing us to react to any new or emerging best practice, making agile incorporations or amendments as appropriate. Members will be able to feed in via the feedback events listed under 'Leaders take accountability for EDI' table on page 19, our EDI networks and through other existing channels.





This document has been designed in collaboration with our members to ensure it meets most accessibility standards. However, if this does not fit your requirements, please contact corporate.communications@rcn.org.uk

The contents are available in full as html on the RCN website at rcn.org.uk/EDI-strategy

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011 613 | June 2024

Agenda Item 5



Terms of Reference: Group Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee

1. Name of Committee

Group Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Group Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee is to provide advice, leadership and oversight to the development, implementation and delivery of the Group Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy.

3. Delegated responsibilities

3.1 The responsibilities of the Committee are

EDI Strategy

- a) To agree with the RCN Group the overall goals, objectives, and priorities that the programme will deliver (programme scope).
- b) To provide strategic and high-level oversight of workstreams.
- c) To provide direction and advice to ensure activities are coordinated and managed in a way that achieves the agreed objectives and key results.
- d) To align, stop, and start initiatives within the agreed programme scope to ensure the right activities are identified, planned, and delivered.
- e) To identify, prioritise, and allocate resources within the agreed programme scope.
- f) To continually appraise, prioritise and align activities to ensure agreed benefits are realised.
- g) To manage and prioritise funding within the agreed annual programme budget across workstreams to ensure adequate resources are released to deliver the objectives and benefits of the EDI programme.
- h) To sign-off key programme documents e.g., Stage plans, Project Initiation Document, etc.
- i) To review the Risk, Action, Issue and Decision (RAID) Log, Lessons Log and Benefit maintained and presented by Programme support.

- j) To sign-off Equalities Inclusion Statement.

Monitor progress of workstreams against targets, budget, and impact

- k) To provide robust challenge and scrutiny of documentation, progress reports and outcome delivery.
- l) To advise and steer implementation and oversee (but not manage) workstreams.
- m) To manage high-level interdependencies and risks across the programme, resolving competing priorities and ensuring risk mitigations are identified and acted upon.
- n) To assess each workstream for consistency and coherence in line with organisational strategy to ensure it is positioned to achieve objectives, and deliver outcomes, KPI's, budgets, milestones, and benefits.
- o) To put in place an over-arching effective communications and information cascade, championing appropriate engagement of members, staff, and customers.

4. Reporting and accountability

- 4.1 The Group Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee is responsible and accountable to RCN Council for the overarching strategy.
- 4.2 Formal minutes of meetings will be kept and approved at subsequent meetings of the Group Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee.
- 4.3 The Chair will report to RCN Council and the Boards of RCN Foundation and RCNi on all meetings and key messages of the Committee and any matters it considers that action or improvement is needed and making recommendations as to the steps to be taken. It will ensure Council is aware of any matters that may significantly impact on the RCN Group. Equally, the committee will be updated on any key issues that it needs to address by Council, TUC and/or PNC.
- 4.3 At the request of the RCN Council, RCNi Board or RCN Foundation Board, the Chair of the Committee will attend a designated section of their meetings to deliver regular updates.
- 4.4 The Committee may approve the establishment of such sub-committees or other groups as it thinks fit to further its work, but these shall be approved by Council.

5. Meetings and quorum

- 5.1 The Group Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee will meet at least six times per year.

- 5.2 Special ad hoc meetings may also be called if the business of the Committee is of such urgency that it cannot wait until the next planned meeting.
- 5.3 The quorum for decision-making is half the Committee (rounded up if an odd number), which must include one external adviser.
- 5.4 The rules and procedures in the *RCN Meeting policy and process* document apply to this Committee.
- 5.5 The Director of Legal and Member Relations (or a designated replacement from the Executive Team) must be in attendance.
- 5.6 A member of the EDI RCN staff team must be in attendance.

6. Membership

- 6.1 There shall be at least 9 members of the Group Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee, chosen via the RCN appointment process, all of whom have equal voting rights. The members shall be:
- 2 members of RCN Council
 - 1 representative of the Trade Union Committee
 - 1 representative of the Professional Nursing Committee
 - 1 representative of the Nursing Support Workers Committee
 - 1 representative of the Students Committee
 - At least 2 external adviser(s) who are experts in the field of EDI.
 - 1 independent representative from the RCN Foundation Board
 - 1 independent representative from the RCNi Board of Directors.

7. Observers

- 7.1 Observers who are elected members may attend meetings at the discretion of the Chair and with the agreement of the Committee. Observers can speak and/or participate in the meeting only with the permission of, or at the request of, the Chair. Regular observers are not permitted.
- 7.2 Individuals attending in observer status will receive those papers relating to the areas relevant to their observer role.
- 7.3 Observers will not usually attend the private or confidential sessions of the Committee and will attend in their own time and at their own expense for in person meetings.

8. Appointment to the Group Equity, Diversity and

Inclusion Committee

- 8.1 Appointments to the committee will be conducted in accordance with the *RCN's Elections and Appointments policies* and with the specific procedure for each election/appointment.

9. Terms of office

- 9.1 Terms of office will be for 4 years except for casual vacancies which will be to the end of the vacant term.
- 9.2 Council members, TU, PNC, Student & Nursing Support Worker members will be appointed to the Committee for the duration of their term on those Committees.
- 9.3 External Advisers first term of office will be for a period of four years. Thereafter, their appointment will be reviewed and extended for a period of up to four years in agreement with the lead Executive Director (12.1) and Chair.
- 9.4 The RCN Foundation Board of Trustees and RCNi Board of Directors will determine their independent non-executive member representative and terms of office.

10. Mid-Term (casual) vacancies

- 10.1 A casual vacancy on the Group Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee shall be filled in accordance with the *RCN's Process for filling casual vacancies*.

11. Chair and vice chair

- 11.1 In accordance with Rule 2.2 in the *Royal Charter*, the Group Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee shall have a Chair. A Vice Chair shall also be elected.
- 11.2 The Chair and Vice Chair shall be elected every two years by the members of the Committee from amongst the members of the Committee.

12. Staff support, advice, and guidance

- 12.1 The lead Executive Director will be the Director of Legal and Member Relations who will ensure support and advice to the Committee as appropriate.
- 12.2 Committee members and staff will work together positively and constructively, in line with the RCN's Respect Charter, to deliver the purposes of the Committee.

12.3 In the unlikely situation where key professional advice presented by staff is not accepted by the Committee, the advice, and reasons for not accepting the professional advice will be fully documented in the minutes of the meeting. Should the responsible director/sponsor conclude this position poses a risk to the organisation and its members, the circumstances will be brought to the attention of the General Secretary/Chief Executive who will assess the seriousness of the position and advise the Chair of Council accordingly. Should a resolved position not be reached the matter will be escalated to Council for a determination on the way forward.

12.4 Secretariat support will be provided by the Governance Directorate.

13. Removal from the Group Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee

13.1 A Committee member may be removed before the end of their term of office on the grounds if they:

- a) have exceeded their powers in a way that is detrimental to the RCN
- b) have failed to discharge their duties
- c) have acted in breach of the RCN's Code of Conduct and/or Respect Charter
- d) have acted in a manner likely to bring the RCN into disrepute
- e) they have failed to attend three consecutive meetings (excluding special ad hoc meetings)
- f) have any active cautions from the NMC, or other regulator, against their name, are currently subject to any NMC, or other regulator's, sanction, and/or they are subject to any ongoing disciplinary proceedings with any of their employers or professional disciplinary proceedings before the NMC or another regulator.
- g) are subject to ongoing disciplinary proceedings in respect of any role they hold at the RCN and/or currently subject to any RCN disciplinary sanction.

13.2 The processes for such removal will be in accordance with the Member Resolution policy.

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually.

Version history

Approved by Council: August 2023

Amendments approved by Council: 17 April 2024 (reviewed by the Governance Committee on 18 February 2024).

They should be read in conjunction with the *Operating Framework for RCN Committees*** and other documents referred to above.

*Note – these terms of reference are subject to ongoing change in line with the implementation of the recommendations of the Council-led governance review (2022).
*Scheme of delegation under revision. ** Operating Framework for Committees in development [July 2022]*