1 hour

of ‘brisk’ exercise per day can offset harmful effects of sitting for periods of 8 hours or more, according to new research
See page 10

Fast fact

‘I can’t stop crying! I can’t believe I’m a nurse! So lucky to have had the bursary, wouldn’t be here without it’

Bursary or Bust campaign founder
Danielle Tiplady @daniellejade198

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Rent crisis exposed as key workers hit with 20% hike

By Erin Dean

The RCN has called for more affordable accommodation for nurses as key workers in London faced a 20% rent hike.

Samuel Jones Court in Peckham was built six years ago for key workers on lower wages.

However, residents have been told to agree to the rent rise – which amounts to an extra £150 a month for a one-bedroom flat – or leave within two months.

L&Q London Housing Association, which manages the site, says the increase is necessary to balance out past rises that were too low, and that key worker tenants will still pay below the market rate.

RCN congress in June heard that UK nurses’ careers and health were being put at risk by long commutes because of the lack of affordable homes close to workplaces.

A congress debate highlighted that the problem was not just found in major cities, with nurses living in popular holiday areas, such as Cornwall, competing with people buying second homes.

In May, an RCN London survey showed that 40% of nurses plan to leave the capital in the next 5 years, many because they cannot afford to stay.

RCN London regional director Bernell Bussue said: ‘The cost of living is contributing to the recruitment crisis in London. Years of below-inflation pay deals for NHS staff mean that buying in the capital is now beyond the reach of many.

‘The government and the mayor need to look at what more they can do to support key workers living in private rented housing, so that nursing staff have the security to live and settle here in the numbers that the NHS needs.’

‘The government needs to look at what more it can do to support key workers in private rented housing’

Bernell Bussue, RCN

IN BRIEF

The associate chief nurse at the Royal Stoke University Hospital urged Pokémon Go fans to avoid his hospital’s emergency department after it became a focal point for players.

Go to rcni.com/pokemon-no

LAW

Nurse’s murder sentence is upheld

Former nurse Victorino Chua has failed in a bid to challenge his conviction and sentence.

Chua was jailed for a minimum of 35 years in 2015 for killing two patients by injecting insulin into saline bags and ampoules at Stepping Hill Hospital in Stockport in 2011.

He was also found guilty of 22 counts of attempted grievous bodily harm, one count of grievous bodily harm, seven attempts of administering poison and one count of administering poison.

His attempt to appeal against his conviction and sentence was rejected last week by judges at the court of appeal in London.

They rejected the argument that his 35-year minimum jail term was ‘manifestly excessive’. The judge in the original trial described Chua’s behaviour as ‘indescribably wicked’.

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Mayor of London Sadiq Khan last week promised to discuss with the health service whether a proportion of homes on NHS land can be reserved for health service workers.

An L&Q spokesperson said: ‘While many residents have renewed their tenancies with us without issue, we do understand that this may prove more difficult to manage for others. We will do everything we can to help those affected as well as assisting them to find cheaper rents, if available, elsewhere.’

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