Policies there to protect us all

The case of a nurse prosecuted following the death of a man who was given the wrong blood type (news, 15 February) is yet another tragic example of why it is essential to follow relevant policies and protocols, especially when administering blood products.

They are put in place to protect both the nurse and the patient. It only takes a moment of carelessness to cause serious harm to the very people we are there to protect. A very sad case for all concerned.

Vltaylor73_927056 via rcni.com

The case of a man dying after being given the wrong blood type shows why checking blood components before administration should always be done by two qualified members of staff.

But sadly, with today’s staffing issues, I can see more of this type of mistake being made. My thoughts go out to all involved.

wroscamp_761676 via rcni.com

Bursary blow not universal

Your news story ‘Degree applications drop highlights “bleak outlook”’ (8 February) states that the government is scrapping bursary funding for nursing students and replacing it with loans.

While this is the case for students starting a degree from September this year, the changes do not apply to graduate-entry students. So anyone starting a postgraduate nursing programme in September will continue to receive an NHS bursary to cover tuition fees and maintenance. I want to clarify the position as my concern is that if people who already have a degree are considering a post-graduate course and think the bursaries have been discontinued they may not apply.

Julie Bliss, senior lecturer, King’s College London

Encephalitis awareness

Last week we marked the 4th World Encephalitis Day, a global campaign with two primary aims. The first is to acknowledge the experiences of survivors of this devastating neurological condition and their family members, while the second is to raise much-needed awareness among the public.

Early estimates suggest this year’s campaign may have reached as many as 50 million people. The fantastic encephalitis resource pack released by Nursing Standard has significantly contributed to this important day. It is available at rcni.com/encephalitis

Ava Easton, chief executive, the Encephalitis Society

Who else leads by example?

In response to the story suggesting nurses who smoke should lead by example (news, 22 February), does that include doctors, physiotherapists and all other members of the multidisciplinary team?

It is always nurses having to give, do and lead by example. The government is killing nurses more through staff shortages, poor pay scales, increased workloads and lack of respect.

Jonathan Duggan

TWEETS OF THE WEEK

Join the @NurseStandard Twitterchat every Thursday from 1pm to 2pm using #NScomment

Last week we asked: Are we able to treat dying patients with dignity?

As a pre-reg nurse I stayed on a bank shift with a client who didn’t have a family. Very rewarding! @fealouJohnson91

I was lucky enough to receive amazing support from nurses, HCAs, doctors at the end of dad’s life. So grateful @suenewse99

Yes, if they were given the specialised training required for meeting the complex needs of these often vulnerable people @JackieSharples

When everyone contributes, from domestic, porters to consultant and everyone @fionaDmurphy