In brief

Professor of children's nursing at the University of Central Lancashire Bernie Carter has won the presidential medal for excellence in person-centred health care awarded by the European Society for Person-Centred Healthcare. Professor Carter is also director of the children's nursing research unit at Liverpool's Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust. She was presented with the award at the society's conference in Madrid.

A pacifier that encourages breastfeeding has been developed for premature babies by final-year design student from Brunel University London Aliki Siganou. Ms Siganou said: 'My design – Papilla – enhances the breastfeeding experience, comforting the infant without interfering with the process itself and avoiding so-called nipple confusion. Papilla's special shape improves facial muscle co-ordination and aids oral-facial development.'

The RCN has responded to the second Lancet Commission report on health and climate change, which says that it must be seen as a 'medical emergency'. RCN general secretary Peter Carter said the report makes clear how reducing the effects on the environment can benefit public health. ‘More walking and cycling to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels, for example, will prevent respiratory diseases, but also encourage people to be more active.'

Updated guidance on assessing the signs of and managing child sexual abuse – The Physical Signs of Child Sexual Abuse – brings together the latest knowledge and evidence to aid clinical decision making. There are three new chapters: Anogenital signs of accidental injuries in girls and boys, Genital bleeding in prepubertal girls and Healing in ano-genital injuries. Visit tinyurl.com/oagxybx

Move to raise awareness of anaphylaxis caused by bee and wasp stings

A NATIONAL campaign is highlighting the dangers of anaphylaxis from wasp and bee stings – and how allergic people can avoid or treat the condition.

Stings caused more than 70% of all deaths from anaphylaxis in the UK between 1992 and 2001, according to guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence.

For details of the Bee Resistant awareness raising campaign see www.beeresistant.com

Perinatal death figures prompt call to end postcode lottery of care

FIGURES SHOWING wide variations in the rates of baby deaths across the UK have resulted in a call to end to the ‘postcode lottery of care’. Each day, there are 15 neonatal deaths and, in 2013, more than 5,700 families faced the death of their baby at or around the time of birth.

Sands, the stillbirth and neonatal death charity, was commenting on the first Perinatal Mortality Surveillance report published by the Mothers and Babies: Reducing Risk through Audits and Confidential Enquiries across the UK collaboration, which looked at perinatal deaths for births in the UK between January and December 2013.

There was an overall improvement in the rates of baby deaths − 7.3 per 1,000 births in 2013 – continuing the trend from 2003. But this masks a wide variation in the rates of baby deaths at NHS trusts and health boards. Only Barnet and Dorset had mortality rates that were substantially lower than the UK average.

The report recommends that organisations where mortality rates are more than 10% higher than the national average should review their data on quality and care. It says that poorer mothers have a 57% greater risk of having a baby dying than those from wealthier backgrounds. Black or black British, Asian or Asian British mothers have a 50% increased risk.

Sands research and prevention manager Janet Scott said: ‘Care across the country should be the same for every mother and baby. We urge the government to move forward to establish a standardised review process for all deaths as a priority.’

Details at tinyurl.com/oqeaxkw

College urged to lobby ministers on reducing health inequalities

RCN COUNCIL should lobby UK governments to invest in young people and end child health inequalities, urges a resolution passed at the annual congress.

Proposed by the RCN children and young people’s specialist care forum, it was backed by 99.5% of members in Bournemouth. Lead nurse in children’s cancer at Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust Rachel Hollis (pictured) said the ‘effects of health inequalities in childhood resonates across the health and care spectrum’.

A briefing for members quoted a Centre for Local Economic Strategies report on health equity, which says that a boy born in Manchester can expect to live 14 fewer years in good health than one born in Richmond, Surrey.

London RCN health practitioner committee member Tracy Culpitt said: ‘The effects of poverty can be passed on across generations. ‘Women from poor families are more likely to be in poor health and have significant psychological problems when it comes to pregnancy.’

RCN Gloucestershire branch member Lisa Crooks highlighted the issue of inequalities for young people experiencing mental distress in accessing care and treatment. ‘It can take weeks and months for someone who is unwell to access specialist inpatient treatment.’