PART OF the Transforming Nursing Practice series from Sage/Learning Matters, this book has been written for nursing students on the new degree programme.

Following the passage of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and subsequent restructuring, nursing students in England will find it especially relevant.

The author looks at various aspects of policy, and includes case studies showing how policy is implemented in practice and how nurses can influence policy. She also examines the drivers of health policy at national and international levels.

Polly Lee is a lecturer in health and social care at South Gloucestershire and Stroud College, Bristol.

ROSE MACFARLANE’S memoirs are a delightful read. The book begins with Rose’s early family life in Derbyshire and Cornwall, and nurse training at Sheffield’s Royal Hallamshire Hospital. She writes about the ups and downs of her life and work in London in the 1960s – marriages, divorces, childbirth, and nursing.

The cover depicts a vibrant Rose in 1968, in the Jordanian capital Amman. She arrived at a new hospital as a United Nations Association volunteer, shortly after the Six-Day War of 1967. As the only trained nurse, she was ‘Miss Queen’ and immediately promoted to the position of matron.

Helen Sullivan is a retired nurse, Hove, East Sussex.

THIS HANDBOOK is an invaluable resource for healthcare workers, managers and patients. It looks at the right to exercise the duty of care, how to raise concerns, protecting others and looking after oneself.

Starting with the 2,000 pages and 290 recommendations of the Francis report, the author reiterates that NHS staff must prioritise their duty of care to patients.

He adds that facilitating and protecting the right of staff to exercise that duty is the key role of management.

The author also discusses the Berwick report on the working environment and staffing levels required for safe health care, and pressures on staff who raise concerns.

Bridget Ryan is a bank nurse in Birmingham.

International outlook

Successful service integration

MUCH HAS been written recently about the need for greater integration of health and social care services, and of acute and community health service. The challenges these processes present are not unique to the UK and several models of integration from around the world, including the US, have been examined by staff working in the NHS.

The organisations Kaiser Permanente, in California, and Geisinger, in Pennsylvania, for example, combine health insurer and provider roles to deliver integrated healthcare services. The Veterans Health Administration (VA), the largest publicly funded system in the US, co-ordinates care across health and social services.

All three of these organisations have been praised for improving service integration for patients and investing in nursing.

Clearly, US and UK health systems differ considerably, but these models offer insights into how to set up working environments in which nurses can show leadership and place patients at the centre of care.

Kaiser Permanente has invested time and resources into knowledge and information exchange between nurses, better handovers and greater patient empowerment.

At Geisinger, the views of nurses can be heard at every level of governance through the work of a nursing executive council, and of groups seeking to improve care quality, recruitment and retention.

At VA, meanwhile, clinical nurse leaders provide leadership in all settings, and personalised support to patients and families. They are seen as ‘pivotal’ clinicians at the point of care who can intervene to change care plans as necessary. All three systems are underpinned by long-term investment, particularly in IT and associated training, and in the use of electronic health records.

For those who would like to learn more about the three approaches, the RCN has produced a more detailed report on them (RCN 2104a), as well as an update on the latest policy discussions on health and social care integration (RCN 2014b).

Susan Williams is a senior international adviser at the RCN.

References
