Regulator consults on health visitor registration

THE REGISTRATION of health visiting in the UK will be the subject of a major review by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) next year.

A consultation document will be published in January, with a view to changing how health visitors and other specialist community public health nurses are registered from 2013.

The review was announced by NMC chief executive Dickon Weir-Hughes when he addressed the Community Practitioners’ and Health Visitors’ Association annual conference in Brighton, East Sussex. He said the current arrangements were a ‘shambles’, pointing out that, although specialist community public health nurses have their own part of the nursing register, they also have to be registered as nurses and midwives.

Professor Weir-Hughes explained: ‘The review will investigate whether there is any added benefit of having the separate part of the register.’

Join the debate online
Should specialist community public health nurses be on a separate part of the register? Vote at www.nursingmanagement.co.uk

Call to assess aspiring managers to ensure leadership skills

NURSES SHOULD undergo rigorous assessments before they are appointed to high-level posts to ensure strong leadership, according to the top nurse at a leading foundation trust.

Chief nurse at University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Katherine Fenton was speaking last month at one of seven seminars set up as part of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust public inquiry. She said effective leadership is needed if there is to be high quality care, yet ward sisters have too much to do and are often unsupported.

‘We have completely overburdened their role and eroded their authority,’ Ms Fenton said. ‘We should value the ward sister role and currently we do not.’ She added that many managers are appointed to executive director posts without any evidence that they are competent.

Health service slow to deal with complaints, says ombudsman

‘PATCHY AND slow’ is how health service ombudsman Ann Abraham describes the progress the NHS has made in dealing with patients’ complaints. Too many minor disputes were escalated to her office before they were resolved, she said. The two most common reasons for complaints were poor explanations and no acknowledgement of mistakes.

The report is available at www.ombudsman.org.uk/listening-and-learning-2011

Pocket guides on the essentials of care such as nutrition and medication are being distributed to nurses at an NHS trust. The ‘back to basics’ cards remind staff at Stockport NHS Foundation Trust about five areas of nursing care, including communication and preventing pressure ulcers and falls.

According to assistant director of nursing Christine Gidley, the cards have ‘worked extremely well’ since they were launched in September.

A centre focusing on the issues of health and wellbeing has been launched at Leeds Metropolitan University and will undertake research into the health status of individuals and communities. The Institute for Health & Wellbeing will investigate issues such as men’s health, healthy communities, health promotion and nutrition and childhood obesity.

A clinical nurse specialist and nurse commissioner has joined the RCN to promote the role of executive nurses. Naomi Chapman (pictured), who has worked as a children’s and district nurse, joined the college last month to help develop and promote its Network for Executive Nurses among members and health organisations. She is based in the RCN Leeds office.

Nursing Management is recruiting reviewers for its various sections in all subject areas. Reviewers may be asked to evaluate and suggest improvements for clinical, practice and continuing professional development articles, usually ranging in length from 1,400 to 3,500 words. Contributors may also be asked to review books and write reviews of 150-300 words. If you are interested in contributing to the journal in this way, please contact helen.hylan@rcnpublishing.co.uk