Hancock helped raise the standards for all nurses

There will be many people who write to say how they have admired Christine Hancock’s work as general secretary of the RCN.

I think she will be best remembered for her work on the value of nursing, which raised nurses’ self-esteem and self-confidence, and her absolute commitment to the inclusion of all nurses in the work of the RCN, especially black nurses.

Those of us working for equal opportunities found her public statements against racism in the NHS both courageous and timely.

The RCN will miss her wisdom and enthusiasm, but I wager that she will still be involved in health care and will remain proud to be called a nurse.

Sally Jones
By email

Former EN qualification is still highly regarded

Did anyone else smile wryly at ‘Southern crossover’ (Features October 4), which discussed the reintroduction of EN training in New Zealand?

Shortly before EN training was phased out in the UK, I wrote an article exploring the political and professional pressures that had fostered its development.

I felt that as a profession we were in a position to learn from our history.

Since the inception of the qualification in the 1940s, ENs have fulfilled vital roles in care delivery and contributed hugely to ensuring an adequate supply of nursing staff.

Healthcare assistants (HCAs) play an equally important but different role. On-the-job training and competence-based skills for those staff are, in terms of our accountability, essential. But HCAs are not a replacement for registered colleagues.

I have helped many ENs complete conversion, diploma and degree courses over the years. This is as it should be for those who want to pursue their professional development in this manner. But it does not detract from the value of the original qualification in terms of attracting people who might otherwise have been unable or unwilling to enter the profession.

Nicky Lanoe
Guernsey

Not all nurses support EN comeback in New Zealand

It was with interest that we read the recent article on the reintroduction of ENs in New Zealand. But we would like to point out that not all nurses in New Zealand support the reintroduction of enrolled nurse training.

Nor does the College of Nurses (New Zealand) support the move. It values the contribution of enrolled nursing in the past century and acknowledges the ongoing contribution of the very experienced ENs who remain.

However, it argues that it is essential that a critical analysis of the pros and cons of the reintroduction are undertaken, and that discussion of the issue is not seen in any way as either praise or criticism of existing ENs.

The College of Nurses proposes nationally standardised training for health service assistants, managed on the New Zealand Qualification Authority framework. They suggest these people could and should be regulated by the Nursing Council.

Kate Bolton and Jenny Carryer
New Zealand

Correction

The award that Gill Brook received in the Queen’s birthday honours was a CBE, not an OBE, as reported last week (News October 25). We apologise for the error.

OBITUARY

Francis Stanley Lawlor

One of Leicestershire’s pioneer nurses, Francis Stanley Lawlor trained at St Luke’s Hospital, Bradford. In 1959, Mr Lawlor was appointed to the General Nursing Council for England and Wales. He was a former chair of the Sheffield Area Nurse Training Committee and served on General Nursing Council committees. We first met in 1966, when he was chief nursing officer at the Groby Road Hospital, Leicester, and I was a newly qualified SRN. In August the following year, aged 52, he became the first male ‘matron’ appointed at Leicester General Hospital.

A caring person with great insight into the needs of the nursing profession, Mr Lawlor also displayed leadership qualities. He was perceptive and astute, able to recognise potential in staff, and was supportive in helping them to reach that potential.

He died in Leeds aged 88 and is survived by his wife, Irene.

Bernard Stone
Leicester