CHARITY SCHEME RECOGNITION COULD BE ADDED TO FEEDBACK FOR REVALIDATION

The RCN has praised a new scheme that recognises nurses going ‘the extra mile’ to provide compassionate care.

The Point of Care Foundation is offering patients, families and colleagues the opportunity to nominate nurses and other healthcare staff, as part of its Commend a Caregiver programme.

By donating £20 or more to the charity, which supports healthcare staff in caring for patients, the commended caregivers will receive a letter and certificate.

The caregiver’s name, role and organisation are added to an online list of nominated staff.

RCN professional lead for acute, emergency and critical care Anna Crossley said caregivers do not expect to receive recognition for care they provide as part of their daily work.

‘But a thank you, whether spoken or written, goes a long way,’ she said.

Ms Crossley said the recognition would also be a great example of patient feedback for nurses and midwives to use for revalidation and appraisals.

Practice nurse Kate Romanos of Corner Ways surgery in Beckenham, Kent, was nominated by her neighbour Pauline Flanagan for providing support during her dying mother’s last days at home. Ms Romanos, who has been a nurse for more than 40 years, said that she is humbled by her nomination.

However, some nurses’ employers might prohibit them from accepting certain gifts. The NMC Code also warns nurses and midwives to refuse ‘all but the most trivial gifts, favours or hospitality, as accepting them could be interpreted as an attempt to gain preferential treatment’.

“We recognise that patients want to thank nurses and midwives who provide great care,” said an NMC spokesperson.

To commend a caregiver go to www.pointofcarefoundation.org.uk/ fundraising.

Handling obese patients takes toll on staff health

About 1,000 NHS workers have been injured while caring for obese patients over the past five years, freedom of information data show.

One nurse was signed off with neck, back and shoulder pain after having to hold a patient’s breasts during an ultrasound, data collected by the Sun newspaper revealed.

A staff member at Great Ormond Street Hospital incurred a back injury lifting a 15st child, and a nurse developed a back strain helping to move a 29st patient for an X-ray.

The data showed that at least 923 staff were hurt caring for obese patients between 2011 and 2015.

Some of the injuries included sprained necks, hernias, kicks to the ribs, muscle tears, trapped fingers and slipped discs, the newspaper said.

It calculated that four years and seven months were lost in sick days.

RCN senior employment relations officer Kim Sunley said: ‘Employers need to ensure staff have the right equipment and training to reduce physical strain, particularly since the number of very heavy patients is increasing.

‘Having enough available staff to help patients and other staff would also ease the physical pressures. Many nurses with back problems need time off.’

National Obesity Forum spokesperson Tam Fry said: ‘Some hospitals have been negligent in trying to get away with using standard equipment for obese people and the result is, something is going to snap.’

Chartered Society of Physiotherapy head of practice Steve Tolan said: ‘It is critical that sufficient staff are available to provide the care and treatment safely that bariatric patients require and to avoid injuries occurring.’

He added: ‘It is also essential that the NHS invests in preventive services, such as physical activity and weight management programmes, to actively reduce the growing number of people who are becoming obese in the first place.’

NEWLY QUALIFIED PRACTICE NURSES GET TRAINING CASH

General practices can soon apply for funding awards of £8,000 to support the training and development of each newly qualified nurse they take on.

The General Practice Nurse Ready (GPNR) scheme is open to any practice in Yorkshire and the Humber for nurses who join the NMC register no earlier than August 1.

A Health Education England (HEE) spokesperson said: ‘The GPNR scheme is a way to encourage GP practices to employ new nurse registrants by helping facilitate the first two years of their professional development.’

Eligible practices must assure HEE they can advertise for a new registrant and then offer that nurse ‘a good quality learning environment’ involving the whole practice team.

Newly registered nurses will embark on an NMC approved mentorship programme in their second year at the practice.