IN BRIEF

Scotland clarifies effect of integration on employment

Nurses will not be compelled to transfer to local authority employment under plans to integrate adult health and social care in Scotland.

In its report on the integration of health and social care, the Scottish Government’s health and sport committee says it welcomes reassurances from stakeholders that there will be no requirement for staff to transfer.

The report, published last week, is based on its inquiry into the challenges posed by the integration of health and social care integration. The move was announced by health secretary Nicola Sturgeon in December 2011, who later told the committee the transfer of staff was not a legal requirement.

The report also says that there must be clear lines of accountability for services.

RCN Scotland director Theresa Fyffe said accountability was one of the ‘thornier’ issues raised in the report. ‘We would urge the Scottish Government to apply clear and consistent lines of accountability across the country,’ she said. ‘This will help avoid the mistakes of the past and ensure the public knows how to access the right care professional when they need one.’

Guidance on obesity has been released for consultation by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. The draft recommendations include gathering local residents’ views on their weight and their concerns about barriers to exercise, such as poorly maintained public areas. A quarter of the adult population in England is obese. Go to http://tinyurl.com/NICE-obesity-consult by June 6.

Nursing Standard and RCN Students are seeking the views of students and newly qualified staff on the current state of nursing and midwifery education. Our joint survey can be completed online until June 1, and participants will be entered into a draw to win an iPad2 and Marks & Spencer vouchers worth a total of £175. The survey results will be collated and used to form an overall picture of student life today. Go to http://www.tgmc-surveys.co.uk/studentSurvey.htm

A performance measurement system developed to instil ‘friendly competition’ between nursing teams has been created by Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust.

The nursing metrics system, believed to be the first for use in a mental health setting, involves matrons on the inpatient units asking patients a set of questions covering five areas, including respect and infection prevention. The results are published on the staff intranet every month.

Nurses will be among about 700 UK healthcare professionals training health workers in developing countries as part of a government scheme.

The Department for International Development is funding a four-year programme in which volunteer health workers will teach and support their international counterparts. The scheme will provide 1/42 placements overseas for six months or more and 600 short-term volunteering opportunities. Go to http://tinyurl.com/bj4mkbd

Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust in London has appointed a nurse as its new chief executive. Tony Bell (pictured), chief executive of Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust, will replace Heather Lawrence, who is leaving after 12 years as chief executive.

The RCN has condemned the government’s refusal to publish its full report on the risks associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2012. RCN general secretary Peter Carter said it was ‘astonishing’ that the government had chosen not to publish the full risk register document, written in 2010. Instead the Department of Health has published a summary of the risk register. This can be read at http://tinyurl.com/c4ka6u6

A trust that underpaid newly qualified nurses for six years agreed to repay them just one day before the RCN was due to take the case to an employment tribunal. Frimley Park Hospital NHS Trust in Surrey settled the case last week, although the details have not been disclosed. The case centred on its refusal to give newly qualified nurses two pay rises in their first year, despite it being a requirement under Agenda for Change.