A FAIR WAY TO PLAN YOUR CAREER

Frances Pickersgill previews the RCN Bulletin Jobs Fair which takes place next week

The largest jobs fair in the UK for nurses will hit London next week. The annual RCN Bulletin Jobs Fair brings together career-conscious nurses and the organisations that want to employ them.

While there may be a job squeeze in the NHS, other areas of the health sector are experiencing something of a boom.

Overseas opportunities in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the Middle East are increasing, and there are vacancies in the military reserves.

Closer to home, primary care, community services and the independent and voluntary sectors all have something to offer.

For nurses intent on remaining in the UK and making a success of their careers in the NHS, representatives, advisers and exhibitors will be at the fair to help explore career options and development, and discuss opportunities.

The RCN Bulletin Jobs Fair is a huge event with a vast array of nursing jobs and training opportunities. The first day of the fair is targeted at experienced clinicians, specialist and advanced nurses and those considering taking their career to management levels.

The second day of the fair is for less experienced nurses wanting to test the nursing careers market in specialist areas or outside conventional settings.

Running alongside the exhibition is a two-day programme of free career-related seminars for nurses who want to keep up to date with the latest in career development. Topics in the seminar programme include using social media for job searching; perfecting job applications, CVs and interviews; early career options; working overseas; management skills for clinical nurses; keeping your continuing professional development up to date; presentation skills; commissioning and business skills for senior clinical nurses; and making the transition from acute to community nursing.

RESOURCES

The RCN Bulletin Jobs Fair takes place at the Business Design Centre, 1 Upper Street, Islington, London N1 OQH on September 11 and 12. The event is free of charge, but advance booking is strongly advised.

www.rcnbulletinjobsfair.co.uk

Social care The Care and Support White Paper and the draft Care and Support Bill have been published. The government plans to improve quality of care by training more care workers and increasing the number of apprenticeships; increasing client-held budgets; clarifying entitlements to care and introducing consistency in eligibility for care; providing better information about quality of care; and introducing legal rights for informal carers. Closing date for comments is October 19. www.caringforourfuture.dh.gov.uk

Leadership Scholarships worth up to £15,000 are on offer for nurses and midwives who want to become leaders with the skills and self-confidence to contribute positively in healthcare. Florence Nightingale Foundation scholars undertake a bespoke programme in personal leadership, career development activities and a project to improve patient and/or client care. Applicants should have the support of their organisation to fast track them to a senior leadership position. Closing date for applications is September 21. tinyurl.com/FNF-leaders

Masterclass An interactive masterclass called Nursing research: getting research, audit and service developments into practice and publication, will be held on September 19 at the Hallam Conference Centre, London. It will appeal to senior sisters and nurses who have a responsibility to ensure that audit, service developments and research work results in action at practice or ward level. For more information go to tinyurl.com/HCE-masterclass
Personal targets are crucial, says Shirley Baah-Mensah

Changes to the NHS make it vital to plan for success

Whatever your view of the need for change in the NHS, the unavoidable fact is that it has already changed. Some trusts have chosen the social enterprise route, while others have become foundation trusts or face amalgamation or being taken over by private companies.

Organisations are downsizing, business models are changing and almost every role in the NHS workforce is under review.

All this, together with a £20 billion efficiency drive, makes it impossible for staff to remain unaffected.

**Take control**

In this situation, nurses need to take control of their career development by establishing personal goals that encourage creativity, confidence and motivation.

Goal-setting is a powerful process that encourages individuals to think about their future and find ways of turning ideas into reality.

The SMART mnemonic allows you to draw up a series of dynamic goals that will keep you focused (see box).

Nurses can use the SMART framework to develop their vision, focus on acquiring new knowledge and organise their time and resources to achieve their goals.

Setting clearly defined goals, backed up by a series of minor goals and short-term plans, will help nurses to achieve more ambitious goals. A daily ‘to do list’ and a regular review of your plans will ensure you remain on course to achieve your ambitions in the face of a changing NHS.

Shirley Baah-Mensah is a modern matron at North East London Community Services. She will be speaking at the RCN Bulletin Jobs Fair on September 12.

If you would like further information on how to set goals that will keep you in employment or move you forward in life, please contact www.nomorelimits.co.uk

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**Prepare for the fair**

- Explore the website and come prepared to speak to the employers you are interested in.
- Take copies of your CV and dress smartly so that you can be interviewed for a job at the fair.
- Take a recording device with you so you can make a note of career-related information from relevant employers.
- Anticipate questions employers could ask you in an impromptu interview at their stand as this may lead to a formal job interview at a later date.
- Prepare questions that you would like to ask employer exhibitors.
- Collect exhibitor materials that may interest you in the future as well as the present.
- Plan your attendance at the fair to coincide with the seminars you want to attend.

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**Education**

The European Federation of Nurse Educators is holding a conference in association with the RCN education forum on October 3-5 at Cardiff City Hall. Themes include research and innovation in teaching and learning; enhancing the student experience; developing nurse teaching competencies; and developing education with nursing practice. tinyurl.com/FINE-conference

**Volunteering**

Voluntary service overseas (VSO) is holding a free introductory evening on September 13 at 7pm at its headquarters in Putney, south west London. The event will give details about volunteering with VSO and explain what it is looking for in volunteers. Booking is essential. www.vso.org.uk/events/meet-vso-registration.asp

**Name change**

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) is the new name for the Health Professions Council. The change was made by the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The council regulates 16 health, psychological and social care professions.

The name change coincides with the transfer of the regulation of social workers from the General Social Care Council to the HCPC. www.hcpc-uk.org/aboutus/namechange

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**Older people**

The RCN will hold a series of workshops to introduce college guidance, toolkits and learning resources on hospital care for older people and people with dementia. The events will support nurses in developing plans for local implementation. Participants will learn about a safe staffing toolkit, web-based resources and an e-learning module. The first event will be held in Bolton on October 10. tinyurl.com/bpwh8xc