HELP THE NURSING AND MIDWIFERY COUNCIL TO SHAPE REVALIDATION

Revalidation aims to promote a culture of professionalism and accountability by encouraging ongoing reflection (News October 23). It will support nurses and midwives in their learning and development.

The importance in gathering feedback from a third party – whether it is from patients, students or peers – is to reflect on that feedback, regardless of whether it is positive or negative. Its relevance to revalidation comes from using the learning from the feedback to improve the care given.

While appraisals are vital to professional development, we understand that they are not universal. So the model of revalidation will need to be flexible to ensure that it is fit for purpose across all care settings.

Much of the detail behind using third-party feedback and confirmations is still being formed. Nurses and midwives will have an opportunity to shape the model of revalidation by participating in the consultation or by contacting the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) directly by email at revalidation@nmc-uk.org

Katerina Kolyva, director of continued practice, Nursing and Midwifery Council

WE NEED NURSE CONSULTANTS FOR THEIR VOICE AND LEADERSHIP

I am pleased the RCN is highlighting the declining numbers of nurse consultants employed by the NHS (News October 23). We need nurse consultants for their local and national voices, as well as their leadership.

Nursing is the soft underbelly of the NHS. We are the largest workforce and the most vulnerable. Within the hospital environment, we lack sufficient nurses who have the authority to highlight the value of day to day nursing contributions to care.

We are fortunate to have a wealth of dedicated nurses, but we need to be building for the future. Nurse consultants can provide leadership clinically, support nurses within their organisation, and be a strong nursing voice with a place at the commissioning and planning tables.

We need to raise our game and shout a bit louder to demonstrate our value. Sue Oliver, nurse consultant, rheumatology, Barnstaple

FAMILY ILLNESS MADE ME AWARE OF THE POSITIVE SIDE TO ZERO-HOURS

I would like to comment on the long-running debate over zero-hours contracts. I had a zero-hours contract when my daughter was ill and I was unable to commit to regular hours.

The contract meant I was able to work at short notice when possible. Work was not always there when I was available, but I valued the opportunity to work on an ad hoc basis.

I was able to work in an emergency department where I received mandatory training and personal development. This was preferable to agency work.

Having the zero-hours contract helped me maintain my registration. Jessica Higson, by email

SHARON DENNIS FELLOWSHIP WOULD HONOUR A LEADING BME NURSE

It is good that England’s chief nursing officer Jane Cummings is channelling her ‘distress’ about the paucity of senior nurses from black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds into action (News October 16).

Ms Cummings will work with NHS employers and the RCN to examine ways of changing workplace cultures. Perhaps these bodies could fund some form of fellowship through which one of our leading BME nurses could be employed to undertake such an examination and stimulate change.

This initiative could be named the Sharon Dennis fellowship in celebration of the life and work of a BME nurse who did not let the ‘glass ceiling’ impede her progress in leading and making a difference in so many ways – before her sad and untimely death.

Cris Allen, by email

See obituary overleaf

TWEETS OF THE WEEK

No doubt it is now in the ether for managers to get rid of consultant nurses as part of the wicked down-banding of the last few years @tombolger

Many managers do not realise how pivotal nurse consultant roles have become. Still seen as ‘nice extra’ @alisonleary1

If tonight on chronically understaffed ward a nurse should make a patient error, she’ll be accountable for her part. Why is Hunt absolved? #NHS @archangelolill

‘Constant attention by a good nurse may be just as important as a major operation by a surgeon’ – Dag Hammarskjold #QOTD @STTI

Indwelling catheters should never be used to make life easier for nurses! Should always be in pts best interest! #wenurses @joeykanga2

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