The future of nursing is in your hands

Every student cohort brings new life, talent and possibilities to the profession

Now more than ever, nursing is a profession with great potential. Some may think it is on the brink of collapse, but I believe nursing is the solution to many of our health challenges and will go from strength to strength. And that is because of you.

As new students joining the profession, you are the transfusion we need – of new life, new talent and new possibilities. Every nurse is unique, and I cannot wait to discover what each of you will bring to the nursing community.

Right now, you are entering what will feel like a whirlwind, so it is important to keep your feet on the ground. From the fight for fair pay to the staff shortages rife across the health service, there is a storm brewing around nursing. But the good news is that the RCN will do the fighting with you and for you, so you can focus on becoming the best nurse you can be.

You are entering one of the most exciting, diverse and fulfilling careers this country has to offer. Never before has nursing been such a dynamic profession. From saving lives in intensive care to supporting someone with learning disabilities to live an independent life, the possibilities are endless and there is so much to explore.

So where will your career take you? Will you go into academic research, finding new and innovative ways to improve patient care? Will you go onto the ward, using your clinical skills to get the best outcomes for your patients? Or perhaps you'll head out into the community, helping people stay healthy in their day-to-day lives.

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You may not even be close to deciding, but that’s okay. As a student, you’ll travel through a variety of healthcare settings, every day coming that little bit closer to the place that’s right for you. And if you change your mind? That’s okay too. Nursing is as flexible as it is diverse. As a nursing student, you will build a host of transferable skills that you can use in a variety of services in a wide range of settings.

If you are a first-year nursing student in England, this year brings new challenges with the removal of the bursary. As the first cohort that will have to take out loans instead, you will have the added burden of this sitting on your shoulders. But don’t let it stop you – I applaud you for finding a way to navigate the government’s unfair move. Now let’s see what else you can do.

If you need help with your studies, or if it all just becomes too much, the RCN is here for you. Give RCN Direct a call and we will help you find the best way through.

RCN student membership is just £10 a year and comes with finance and career advice, legal support, access to the largest nursing library in Europe and much more. For more information go to rcn.org.uk/students