

Royal College of Nursing (RCN) Report for POOSH Meeting

Changes have taken place in the Forum structure within the RCN. From 1st October 2010 the Society of Occupational Health Nurses (SOHN) Forum was subsumed into a new **Public Health Forum** with other discreet specialties (Travel Health, Health Visitors, Sexual Health and TB nurses) who are supportive of each other.

Cynthia Atwell, formerly Chair of SOHN is the Chair of the new Public Health Forum until 2010. Thereby, Occupational Health as a discipline has been leading the field in the new Forum.

To progress Occupational Health initiatives and represent the RCN on government and other professional bodies, bids are made to finance this work. A group of experienced and influential OHNs formerly elected onto the two OH forums in the RCN are utilised for this work.

Working Plan

- One initiative being considered is the 'older person' as a joint public health initiative.
- One OH nurse, Helen Kirk prepared a briefing paper on OH nurse education. This has now been taken on as a project by the Council for work and health.
- The Nursing and Midwifery Council is reviewing part 3 of the Nurses register regarding specialist practice registration as this has been fraught with problems. Anne Harris is to lead on this with Jeremy Smith (AOHNP president), Helen Kirk and Caroline Whittaker.
- A meeting is being organised at the RCN to look at standards for OH technicians. The RCN believe that OH technicians should be managed similarly to health care assistants in the NHS and will be invited to join the RCN to obtain legal indemnity. There is RCN funding to run focus groups with all stakeholders to reach a consensus view on this. Pauline Crowd has been spearheading this work for Company Health.

Representation

The **Council for Work and Health** (formerly the Council for OH) is now chaired by Diana Kloss. Cynthia Atwell represents the RCN on the Council and Helen Kirk deputises. The last meeting was held in October, the next meeting will be in March.

Dame Carol Black Review - Moira Buchanan (RCN President) is the RCN representative on the stakeholder council. Sharon Horan also attends as the Public Health Forum (OH) representative.

Input from RCN (Sharon Horan) to NICE Long Term sickness absence

Helen Kirk and Graham Johnson were involved in developing the OH National Standards for providers. Launch date for this is 13 Jan 2010

General information to all

- On Monday 7th December the DWP are launching mental health materials on supporting people with mental health problems in the workplace. This follows the launch of the NICE guidance document on promoting mental well-being in the workplace in which Helen Kirk participated. <http://www.nice.org.uk/PH22>
- Boorman review - final report released, much the same as the interim report. The RCN participated in the consultation.
- GMC changes to ethical practice guidelines (confidentiality) - latest information is that the GMC informally expect processes to deal with this issue to be in place by Easter. The RCN are currently considering this as it will have implications for OH nursing practice in providing timely information and reports to line management on their employees.