

Proposers' statement

This statement is on behalf of members who have petitioned for the calling of an EGM to debate the handling of communication and processes associated with the 2018 pay award in England plus a vote of no confidence in the leadership of the RCN and in particular calling on RCN Council as a body to stand down.

We are pleased to be able to inform members of our concerns and why we have called for this EGM.

We recognise that RCN Council has initiated an independent Inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the pay award and that members should receive some feedback from this inquiry that will aid the discussion. We also note that the RCN Chief Executive and General Secretary is leaving her post by mutual agreement.

Whilst we acknowledge the significance of both the above we also believe that it is essential that we the members of the RCN are able to debate the issue and contribute to the outcomes following these unfortunate circumstances and set out our reasons below:

- The misleading messages, whether intentional or otherwise, regarding the size of increases to members' pay
- The language used in some of the messaging regarding members e.g. describing them as delusional
- Implying that some activists understood that the 3% in year one would be split
- The decision to link incremental increases to cost of living increases in order to inflate the size of the pay award
- Concerns around the failure of staff, the Trade Union Committee or Council to recognise that the 3% in year one would be split.

(continued on next page)

Council statement

The upcoming discussion of the NHS pay deal and its communications in England is to be welcomed. We understand and agree that mistakes were made and are moving quickly to learn from them in the best interests of the College and you our members.

Just as the Council is responsible for holding the management of the College to account, we are in turn held to account by you our fellow members. Therefore those members who have petitioned the EGM should be supported in exercising that right. We are members ourselves, elected by you to act on your behalf, and we are pleased to have this opportunity to raise and discuss these matters of concern with you.

Since the Pay Deal issue emerged there has already been significant action at the College, and there will certainly be further changes to come:

- At the beginning of August, an independent external review into the processes and communication of the 2018 NHS Pay Deal began. This was set up as soon as the Council realised there was an issue. The interim findings have already been published so that the review can inform the EGM. We have committed to addressing the review's findings in full and have already begun doing so.
- Janet Davies has left her role as Chief Executive & General Secretary with Dame Donna Kinnair covering the position on an interim basis.

The review, and the EGM itself will be a good opportunity for the College's leadership to take a broader assessment of its strategy and activities. We are determined to find new ways to hear the voice of all our members and truly involve them in every aspect of the College's work.

It has undoubtedly been a challenging few months for the College, and those few months came at a time when the College had been negotiating for a number of years with a Government intent on an austerity agenda.

We believe we are firmly headed in the right direction, taking careful measure and advice from independent and expert sources, listening to and

(continued on next page)

Proposers' statement (continued)

We recognise that leadership can apply to both senior staff and elected members of the RCN but we believe that given Rule 7.1 of the charter (“There shall be a Council of the College which shall have the general control and management of the administration of the College and may exercise all the powers vested in it by law”) Council must accept accountability for the actions of the RCN in relation to the 2018 pay award. We therefore believe that regardless of any recommendations that are made by the Inquiry and recommended for implementation, the necessary election processes should be put in place to allow members to choose a fresh Council to carry forward work to ensure that a similar situation is not allowed to occur again.

Council statement (continued)

engaging with our members, and deciding with them upon the direction of the organisation.

We hope that you will join in this process, and that we have your confidence to implement changes that will benefit the College and you its members.

In keeping with our trade union processes, the College's Council elections are scheduled to be launched at Congress in May 2019.

We would ask you to disagree with the resolution.

The RCN Council

The Council of the Royal College of Nursing is drawn from the membership of the College.

The day-to-day running of the College is the responsibility of the Executive Team, previously led by Janet Davies. The Council's responsibility is to oversee the Executive Team and hold them to account.

To become a member of the Council an individual must be elected by the membership in statutory elections that take place every other year. Once elected, that member will serve on the Council for four years. If they wish to serve a further term on Council, they must then be re-elected. This ensures the College remains member-led.

In 2015, as part of the Council Review led by Michael Brown, the membership told us that our structures were too large and unwieldy, that it should instead look and act more like a decision-making Board rather than a representative body. Members voted at the 2016 Annual General Meeting to implement the proposals from the review with new governance structures to be in place from January 2018.

Therefore, the RCN now has a smaller elected Council of 17 members and two separate committees were elected with 14 members each: a Trade Union committee and the Professional Nursing committee.